

The History
of
Smith Centre, Kansas



1871

-

1971



AERIAL VIEW of Smith Center in recent years. Present school is at lower right, Chandler livestock building and pens at lower center with county highway commission to the left, Main street can be seen at upper center with Mini-Max at left.

Greetings

This historical booklet was compiled from material written in the Smith County Pioneer, the Smith County Journal, the Smith County Review and from the personal writings of Mrs. Ben Baker, A.L. Headley and other recorders of early day history.

Material for the booklet was collected and written by: Mrs. William Hawes, Mrs. Lawrence Matson, Mrs. Jim Robertson, Mrs. Myron McDonald, Mrs. Roy Bolton, Mrs. Vaughn McColey, Mrs. Roger Kirkland, Mrs. Roger Headley, Mr. Bill Lee, Mr. Art Relihan, Mr. Mack Werts, Mr. Vern Albrecht, Mr. Roy Lumpkin and Mr. Otto Habery. These writers wish to thank all of those who so patiently helped with information and pictures.

Our special thanks to Mrs. Julius Tillman for preparing the design for the front cover of the booklet. Our special thanks to Mrs. Paul Manchester for loaning the writings of Mrs. Ben Baker. Our special thanks to Phyllis Creamer and Elmer Windscheffel for reviewing and helping assemble the material.

We dedicate this booklet to you, who will call Smith Center "Home" in the future, may you handle it with care and preserve it for the generations to come — this heritage of the past.

The Pioneer Trail To Smith Center

This historical booklet of Smith Center was written with a mixed feeling of pride and gratitude—pride because it is the occasion to pay tribute to the pioneers for their bravery, in the unknown, toward the development of our part of the country and gratitude for their undaunted determination to make this land their home.

They came in covered wagons drawn by ox teams to take advantage of the liberal homestead laws and to establish homes for themselves and their families. Many of them came west fresh from service in the Civil War. The trek across the prairies was a journey of peace and hope. They had faith that at some future time the prairies would yield in abundance.

Only in memory do the wagon trails, dugouts and sod shanties exist. In compiling the history of a state, county or city there will always be minor conflicting accounts. There was little incentive, in the hardship of pioneering, to make permanent records. The readers of history must understand the apparent conflicting details are only incidental and should be woven in to the completed fabric. No two human beings see or relate an event in exactly the same way. Sometimes stories grow and expand with the telling but they provide the essence of history.

It is perhaps of interest to note that what is now Smith County became part of the United States with the Louisiana Purchase from France in 1803. In 1845 the present boundaries of Kansas were established as a Territory and it was admitted to the Union in 1861.

Settlers began moving to Smith County during 1869-1870. Early in 1871 there were 9 homestead entries on what was to become Smith County. By January 1872 there were enough settlers, 600, to meet the legal requirements to organize a county. On February 1, 1872 Smith County was born. The county was named for Major James Nelson Smith who is reported to have camped near Center Township on his way east to join the Union forces in the Civil War.

At the time of the settlement of Smith County there was a regular chain of "land boomers" along the Solomon River from Waterville 135 miles east of Cedar. The "land boomers" were steering emigrants to locations in the southern part of the county. The emigrants were told that the northern part of the county was too rough to get

into with teams and wagons and that the water supply was inadequate. The president of Smith Center townsite heard about this and appointed a committee to intercept the emigrants east of Waterville. Thereafter, the tide of settlers was routed north. Soon the land around Smith Center was dotted white with the tents and covered wagons of the first settlers.

The first indication of the location of Smith Center was a red bandana flying from a 7-foot tree limb on the site of the present school grounds. In September of 1871 Smith Center Townsite Company was formed with a capital stock of \$12,000 — 120 shares at \$100 each. The charter members were: J.W. Reynolds, R.A. Wilson, Dr. Bell, W.E. Stone and W.A. Garretson. J.W. Reynolds was the first president; W.A. Garretson, the first secretary and R.A. Wilson, the first treasurer. In 1873 it was discovered that the town company, as such, could not lawfully perfect titles to the land and the corporation was dissolved. The land, consisting of a whole section, was taken up by parties under the Homestead Law except for one quarter section which was reserved as a townsite.

The original survey of Smith Center was made on December 22, 1875. Waite George was the surveyor. The survey provided that the new city be built around a square. However, that plan was abandoned and a new survey and plat was filed in 1876. W.H. Nelson was the surveyor. This survey comprised 160 acres of land and is now known as the original townsite. The government deeded this townsite to John C. Harlan, as Probate Judge, in trust forever to the people of Smith Center. Having gained the required population Smith Center was incorporated in 1885 as a city of third class. At the first city election W.H. Nelson was chosen Mayor.

Smith Center is the only postoffice town in the United States with that name. The legal spelling, as it appears on the official city seal, is Smith Centre.

Early accounts show that the first birth in Center Township was the son of Christopher Noggles on August 25, 1871. E.M. Burr was the first lawyer in Center Township and he also taught school in the fall of 1872. The first marriage in the county was T.J. Burrow and Miss R.L. Dunlap. The ceremony was performed in Center Township on October 16, 1872 by the Rev. F. Albright. The first doctor, Dr. Traverse, settled in Center Township in 1872. The first school house erected in Center Township, District 4, was in 1873.



EARLY SETTLERS lived in homes similar to this home of the Holmes family southeast of Smith Center. Shown are the following members of the Holmes family: Nell, Ed, Mother Holmes, Frank, Fred, Forrest, Clarence, Charles, Bess.

The Homesteaders

There wasn't any architect. No banker made a loan.
To solve their housing problem they were strictly on
their own.

They did not sign a mortgage and they did not own a lot.
Just stopped the covered wagon at a likely looking spot.

No lumber yards were running. No timber in the hills.
Nothing to make beams and joists or window sills.
They had to cut the buffalo sod and quarry every stone.
But finally they got it done — A home to call their own.

No Mansion, but a sturdy house their own strong hands
had made,
It stood on fertile acres that had never been surveyed.
No warranty. No abstract fee, No red tape legal fuss.
They just came out and built the West and left it all for us.

(Changed somewhat from a poem by Gene Lindberg.)

Biographical Sketches

In this section we will attempt to tell our readers about some of our homestead families and the early settlers. These people came to Smith Center and Center Township and formed the foundation for our town to grow and progress. From these settlers we get the inspiration to look forward to the improvements we want for our town in the next century. We are proud of the heritage that they left for us to build on in the future.

We are telling the stories of the homesteaders as completely as space allows. In the early settler stories we are restricting them, to those who settled prior to 1900, and to the settlers who have descendants living in Smith Center and Center Township.

If we overlook anyone in this section we offer our apologies, it was unintentional, and we ask forgiveness.

Homesteaders

Waitus George
A. J. Watson
L. T. Reese
L. C. Uhl, Sr.
John C. Goodale
Mitchell Hays
Wesley Colby
Albert R. Cleveland
Steven M. Reese
H. H. Springer
Martha A. Davidson
John M. Stevens
Ed C. Stevens
Eva Stevens Harlan
William Stevens
Milton Stevens
H. A. Hester
George W. White
Ira B. Smith
Calvin Owens

Morrison C. Burr
Charles C. Burr
Robert A. Chandler
Andrew J. Shaffer
Garrett Dedrick
Charles S. Uhl
Dwight D. Hackett
Perry Hackett
Newton M. Haddon
Dave S. Haddon
Adolph M. Corn
Henry A. Clark
John and Mary White
Samuel L. Logan
Robert C. Logan
Frank L. Morgan
Frank M. May
Perry Stafford
Tim M. Hardacre
John Mollison
J. W. Henderson

Waitus George

Wait George and his wife, MERANDA, were the first residents of Smith Center. Wait surveyed this area in 1871. He homesteaded land just west of the present home of Frank Linneeman. In 1872 Mr. George had a small building erected at Main and West Kansas for a small hotel. A. J. Watson, L. T. Reese and John Goodale were the carpenters. The first mail into Smith Center was brought by team and buckboard and unloaded at the hotel. Before 1872 was over he was named postmaster. Mr. and Mrs. George had one son named Morris, called "Mora". Wait George died in 1878.

Albert Jasper Watson

Albert J. Watson, called A. J., came to Smith Center in the spring of 1871 and filed a homestead where Higley Field is located. In 1872 he went to Illinois for his wife, MARY BURROW WATSON, and his two children, Hattie and Jason. Mrs. Watson's brother Tom J. Burrow and her nephew J. H. Hill came back with them. Mr. Watson built a house on a lot where the Uhl Abstract office was later. Mr. Watson was a carpenter. There were five children in this family: Hattie, Jason, Albert J., Lillian and Clara.

L. T. Reese

Mr. Reese arrived in Smith Center in April 1872. He homesteaded north of present highway 36 and lived in Center Township for 78 years. In 1879 Trube (his nickname) and Miss Florence (Flora) Webb were married on June 12, 1879. The Reeses were the parents of seven children: Mabel, Stella, Milar, Florence, Mildred, Harry and James. Trube was postmaster for several years and then assumed the business of a stockbroker and real estate dealer. He served many years as Justice of the Peace. He was a member of the first Smith Center band, belonged to the Masonic Lodge for 70 years and was a charter member of the Commercial Club - later the Chamber of Commerce.

On June 12, 1929, Mr. and Mrs. Reese celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. On June 12, 1944, they celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary by again repeating their vows with the Rev. Ira Faurot reading the marriage ceremony. Mrs. Reese died in 1946. Mr. Reese lived to celebrate his 100th birthday.

L. C. Uhl, Sr.

Leonard C. Uhl arrived in Smith Center in 1872, when there were only two buildings in the town. He had read law in his brother's law office in Falls City, Nebraska. Mr. Uhl was admitted to the bar in Nebraska in 1872. He practiced law in Smith Center and also conducted a hardware store in a 2-story building which he built, his business was on the first floor and a public gathering hall was on the second floor. Mr. Uhl purchased an 80 acre homestead on the west edge of Smith Center which later became Uhl Addition. In November, 1875, he married Nancy Widick and two sons were born to them, L. C. Jr. and Fred H. L. C. Uhl, Jr. and his wife, Florence Sawyer Uhl, had three children who were raised in Smith Center. They are Eleanor, Dorothy and Robert.

John C. Goodale

John Goodale and Trube Reese came west to Smith Center together and homesteaded on adjoining land. In 1875 Mr. Goodale married Laura Ann Logan and they had two sons, Leonard Earl and John Jr. Mr. and Mrs. Goodale moved into Smith Center in 1895 and Leonard (Lennie) lived on the homestead all of his life. Mrs. Goodale was always known as "Aunt Laura" and started the Church of God in town. She came west with the F.M. Mays and her brothers R.C. Logan (Doc) and Sam Logan who were all homesteaders.

Mitchell Hays

Mitchell Hays came to Center Township in 1877 and lived on his homestead the rest of his life. His wife was Harriet Bowen Hays. To this marriage were born nine children: Mary, Jim, Ida, Rachel, Johnnie, Elmer, Oscar, Belle and Rudy. Rachel married Charles Burr. Belle married Lawrence Weltmer and, after his death, Francis McElfresh. Descendants living in Smith Center now are Charles Weltmer, Chot Burr, Cleone Bur and Ralph (Staff) Hays.

Wesley B. Colby

Wesley B. Colby and his wife, Betty, homesteaded in Center Township in 1882. They had three sons Emery, Merrill and Noel. Dr. Emery Colby married Mattie Williams in 1897 and he passed away in 1935. Merrill married Vergie Munsinger in 1907. Their children are Eldon and Cecil. Noel and his wife, Velma Helfinstine Colby, live in Smith Center. Their children are Judith Ann, Roger and Jane.

Albert R. Cleveland

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Cleaveland homesteaded in Center Township in 1873. The family of seven children attended Smith Center schools. The children were Lottie, Chink, Mamie, Guy, Vivian, Lee and Noel. None of the family remain in this area.

Steven M. Reese

Steven Reese and his wife Isabel homesteaded in Center Township in 1879. Steve was a brother of L.T. Reese. The Reeses reared five children Blanche, Ida, Pearl and twins, Ralph and Roy. Blanche married Jim Boyle and lived in Smith Center.

H. H. Springer

Herbert Springer came to Smith Center in 1875 and homesteaded on land which later became known as the two Springer Additions. His first home was just south of the railroad tracks and the grove of trees on his land became known as Springer's Grove, where many celebrations were held in the early days. Mr. Springer married Mary Fairchild in 1882. Their three children were Frank, Howard and Helen.

Martha A. Davidson

Martha Davidson came to Smith Center with the A.J. Watson family in 1872 and homesteaded on land south of the railroad tracks and west of Main Street, this later became the Burrow Addition. Miss Davidson was housekeeper for J. R. Burrow for several years. She was a half-sister of Adolph Corn, one of the first lawyers in this city.

John M. Stevens

John M. Stevens and his wife Jane, with their family of five children, settled on their Center Township homestead in 1872. Their children were nearly grown when they moved to Kansas so nearly all of them were homesteaders also. The children were Helen, Ed C., Eva and Milton.

Helen Stevens married Will Zimmerman in 1875. Their homestead was in the southwest part of Center Township. He died in 1887. Later, she moved to Smith Center with her children Edna, Allie, Roy and Ethel. Allie was a crippled girl who had to get around in a wheel chair. Edna married George Marty who was a grain dealer in Smith Center.

Ed C. Stevens stayed on his parents homestead awhile and then became a clerk in a store in town. Ed and John Harwood later had a grocery store and meat market for many years. Ed and Miss Nora Dedrick were married in 1880. They had eight children Walter, Louis, Harold, Linnie, Audrey, Lucille, Marie and Esther.

Eva Stevens came to Smith Center, in 1872, with her parents. She married Cal Harlan in 1877. Their children were Ralph, Gertrude, Leone, Lottie, Milton, Grace and Harry. Lottie married Sam Wagner and lived in Smith Center. Their children were Geraldine, Mildred, Evelyn and Oral. Grace married Emmet Womer and retired to Smith Center. Their children are Hilda Jean and Sylvester. A great grandson Sam Wagner of Harlan, is the direct descendant living in Smith County.

William Stevens and his wife, Kate McNulty Stevens, homesteaded near J. M. Stevens but were only here a short time when they moved to Washington State.

Milton Stevens was the youngest of the J. M. Stevens family. He lived on the homestead a few years and then moved to Smith Center. He and Miss Clare Eddy were married and lived in the east part of town. They were the parents of five children Clyde, John, Nellie, Gertrude and Dale. Dale was the wife of the late Kelly Miller of the Kelly-Miller Circus.

H. A. Hester

H. A. Hester filed on a Center Township homestead in 1872. He moved into the homestead and became postmaster in 1878. In 1881 he was elected sheriff. Later, he became an auctioneer and was in partnership with R.L. Brown. In 1881 Mr. Hester married Mrs. Wait George, who had been widowed in 1878.

George W. White

George W. White moved to Center Township in 1873 and homesteaded at the north edge of the township. He was an attorney-at-law and practiced in town. He joined J. R. Burrow in the establishment of the Peoples Bank but he sold his interests to Mr. Burrow and moved back east in the late 80s. The first Fair ever held in the county was on the White homestead. In 1883 he married Nina Newkirk.



J.M. STEVENS LIVESTOCK BARN in 1880's. J. M. Stevens, Morrison Burr and Hoag Williamson are the men. The "Cannonball", early day stage to Gaylord is at the left.

Ira B. Smith

Ira B. Smith filed a homestead in Center Township in 1872. His father, Lyman Smith and a brother Myron, homesteaded at the same time but Myron sold his land to Ira and moved to Texas. Ira and Cora Belle Morgan were married in 1874. They had five children Emily, Herbert, Nettie, Mabel and Luther. The only descendant living in Smith Center at the present time is Nettie Smith Chubb. Mr. and Mrs. Chubb reside in the family home.

Calvin S. Owens

Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Owens and five small children moved to Smith Center in 1882. They homesteaded a mile and a half east of town on Spring Creek. Mr. Owens was elected Probate Judge and they moved into town in 1894. Mr. and Mrs. Owens had eleven children Missouri, Fannie, Alfred, Emma, Lina, Nan, Sadie, Sue, Crete, Calvin Jr. and Tillman. Two of this family, Alfred and Lina, resided in Smith Center all of their lives. Mrs. Effie Rice Owens still resided in town.

Morrison C. Burr

Morrison Burr and his wife, Hannah Miranda, and their children homestead in 1872 on Spring Creek in the southeast portion of Center Township. The Burrs had five children Charles, Nannie, Lydia, Lura and George. Two of these children lived in and raised their families in Smith Center, Charles Burr and Lydia Burr Arnold. Their daughter Lura married J. E. Rorabaugh and had one daughter, Esta, who married Clarence Burwell. One of the Burwell daughters lives in Smith Center today, Ilene Burwell Hannan.

Charles C. Burr

Charles Burr came to Center Township with his family, the Morrison Burrs, and lived here for 71 years. He married Rachel Hays in 1878. Twelve children were born to this union Dora, Mabel, Lena, Glenn, Alpha Hugh, Paul, Carl, Nellie, Mont, Charles J., Lennie and Cleone. Those living in Smith Center now are Charles J. (Chot) and Cleone.

Robert A. Chandler

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Chandler came to Kansas in 1873 and filed on their homestead in Center Township. In 1880 Mr. Chandler was appointed postmaster. In 1885 he and A. C. Coolidge established a general store called the "Red Front". They were partners for two years when Mr. Coolidge bought Mr. Chandler's shares and then the latter became cashier at the State Bank. Mr. and Mrs. Chandler had four children John, Walter, Nellie and Grace. R. A. Chandler's brother, Milo J. Chandler, came with his family in 1876. They were here a short time and moved to Banner Township.

Andrew J. Shaffer

Andrew and Mary Shaffer homesteaded 3 1/2 miles southwest of the townsite. Mr. and Mrs. Shaffer had twelve children. The eight who were living when Mr. Shaffer died in 1912 were Florence, Ella, Jennie, Bertha, Herbert, Homer, John and Earl. Mr. Shaffer's brother "Spang", Shaffer was called "Smith County Watermelon King".

Garrett Dedrick

Garrett Dedrick and his wife, Nancy, homesteaded one mile north of the townsite in 1872. One daughter, Hattie, taught in the Smith Center grade school in the early days. The other daughter, Nora, married Ed Stevens, a grocer in town. There was a son named Charles Dedrick.

Charles S. Uhl

Charles Uhl filed on a claim in Center Township in 1876. His brother, L.C. Uhl, had come to Smith Center in 1872. Charles married Anna Hofer in 1898. The Uhl family moved to California. Anna was an aunt of Eli Detwiler of this city.

Dwight D. Hackett

D. D. Hackett and his wife, Elizabeth, came to Smith Center in 1873. Their homestead was northeast of the townsite. They lived on the homestead a number of years, then moved to Smith Center and lived on West Third Street. Their daughters were Carrie, Ada and Agnes. Ada married Lester Sage, an early day barber in town.

Perry Hackett

Perry Hackett came to Center Township with his brother, Dwight, and each filed for homesteads. Perry married Miss Della Long. After Perry's death, Della married F. M. Carson in 1900 and the late Robert (Bob) Carson was their son.

Newton M. Haddon

Mr. and Mrs. Haddon and their daughter, Rose, came to Center Township in 1873. They homesteaded one mile north and one mile west of the townsite. Mr. Haddon owned this farm for 59 years. They were the parents of three daughters Rose, Lillie and Bessie. Rose was a school teacher and the City Librarian for many, many years.

Dave S. Haddon

Dave and Matilda Haddon filed a homestead in Center Township in 1878. Their two children were Laura Etta and Charles. Charles Haddon and Erma Mays (Mrs. Howard Mays) are all that are left of the Haddon family.

Adolph M. Corn

Adolph Corn and his wife came here in 1872. They took a homestead but gave it up shortly and moved into Smith Center. Mr. Corn was a lawyer and was elected county attorney in 1876 and again in 1880 then, in 1889, he was elected District Judge. Five children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Corn. They were Bertha, Mabel, Otto, Andrew and Harry. Mabel, at age 13, drove the gold spike in the first rail as the Rock Island railroad was being laid at the east limits of the city in 1887. Bertha, the oldest daughter, was the first graduate of Smith Center High School in 1891 and was the only one in the class.

Henry A. Clark

Henry Clark came here with his parents, Alfred and Martha Ann Clark, in 1874. The parents filed on their homestead just north of the townsite. Henry was a nephew of Adolph Corn. Henry and Miss Emma Jones were married in 1884 and lived several years on the homestead. The Clarks had seven children Warren, Alfred, Mabel, Zelda, Anna and Marion. The family moved to Smith Center in 1888 and Mr. Clark worked in the abstract office of E. E. Dugan. He also served as county clerk from 1903-1907. He sold his abstract business and continued with real estate and insurance business. The relatives living in the city now are Alfred Clark and Edna Clark.

John C. and Mary N. White

John and Mary White came to Center Township and filed a homestead claim one mile south of town in 1878 in the name of Mary N. White. Mr. White passed away in 1879. Mrs. White stayed on the homestead and raised her three sons, Wardie, Frank and Emery. Frank was the only son who stayed in Center Township. He farmed and had a meat market in the city for several years. He was one of Smith Center's famous baseball pitchers in the early days and earned the nickname of "Dad" White. He was married twice, once to Bessie Henderson and, after her death, he married Ruby Mankey Kingham. They adopted two children Lewis and Ruby.

Samuel L. Logan

Samuel Logan homesteaded in Center Township in 1874. He and Mary Isabel McNair were married in 1876. Seven children were born in this family, Arthur, Edith, Laura, Edna, Mac, Earl and Charles. Their daughter Edith married Keith Goble, who passed away several years ago, and she lives in her home on West Kansas.

Robert C. Logan

Robert Logan came to Center Township and settled on his homestead in 1873. In 1878 he married Mary J. Long. Mr. and Mrs. Logan raised eight children, Ralph, Nina, Bert, Frank, Boyd, Lulu, Lenora and Danreath (Denny). They lived on their homestead for 34 years and then moved into town. Mr. Logan, better known as "Doc", was appointed postmaster and served 9 years. Their daughter, Lulu, known as Lou, married Sherman Mathis.

Frank Lorenzo Morgan

Frank Morgan arrived in Smith Center in 1877. He bought a relinquishment from Mr. Campbell in July, 1877. He and Miss Frances Barnes were married in 1882. The Morgan land was a mile west of Smith Center where Mr. and Mrs. Clare Morgan now live. The Frank Morgans had seven children, Lewis, Bradford, Beatrice, Frank Earl, Clare B., Frances Louise and Bryant. Clare Morgan married Laura Hicks. They have one son, Marion and one daughter, Donna, living in Smith Center and a daughter, Gracie, in Michigan. Clare bought his father's homestead after the deaths of his parents.

Frank M. May

Francis Marion May and his wife, Mary J. Logan May, with their daughter Lena filed on a homestead in Center Township in 1873. The Mays had three children, Lena, Arthur and Belle. Mrs. Mary May died in 1875. Lena married Henry Peck in 1895 and their children were Rozie, Harold, Velma, Roscoe and Pearl. Lena Peck lived in Smith Center until her death in 1954. In 1876, Frank M. May married Amanda Logan. To them eight children were born, Walter, Neppie, Tressie, Fred, Harry, Hattie, Sevier and Ethel.

Perry Stafford

Perry Stafford, his wife and two children, came to Center Township in 1879. Mrs. Stafford was the former Margaret Isabel Logan. The Staffords homesteaded on a farm one mile east of town on the road leading out from Kansas Avenue. They were the parents of four children, John, Hattie, Fannie and Nellie. Mr. Stafford bought the L. L. Allis general store and conducted it along with farming. Hattie and Nellie lived here most of their lives. Hattie married Clarence Starbuck and had six children. Three of the children survived, Perry Lee, Paul Clarence, and John Robert. Robert married Opal Windscheffel of Center Township. Nellie married Jephtha Wilkerson had six children, Frances, Hazel, Beverly, Ruth, Betty and Margaret.

Tom M. Hardacre

Tom Hardacre and his wife, Lydia Ann Mollison Hardacre, came to Center Township in 1873. They lived on their homestead for several years then moved to town. In 1888 they moved to Lane Township. Their children were Frank, Fred, Anna Bessie and Mary Velma. Bessie Gardner and Velma Mannering still live in Smith Center.

John Mollison

John Mollison and his wife came to Center Township in 1877 and settled on his homestead 2 miles from the homestead of his sister, Mrs. Tom Hardacre. The Mollisons lived on their farm for a time, then moved to town where he started a grocery store. In 1897 the Mollisons sold the store to John Ferris and N. L. Morrison and moved to Colorado. They had six children but Orva was the only one who remained in Smith Center. Orva lived here until his wife died in 1939 and then moved to Colorado.

J. W. Henderson

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Henderson and children homesteaded in the southeast section of Center Township. Mr. Henderson was elected Probate Judge in 1887 and served four years. Their children were Wynne, Will, Jay, Meade, Clyde, Juliette and Stella. Their daughter Stella married Will H. Smith and their children were Hobart, Ray and May.

Center Township

Early Settlers Prior to 1900

* Relatives Living in Smith Center Vicinity

Captain McDowell	Charles Aldrich	Joseph Werts*
Joel Randall Burrow	J. S. Myers	Dan Dyer
W. H. Nelson	David Relihan*	Ed Williams*
A. C. Coolidge	Daniel Relihan*	Elijah Ferbrashe*
H. H. Reed	H. F. Ahlborn*	Hoag Williamson*
Lair Dean	Henry A. Ahlborn*	Jule Jarvis
R. M. Pickler	Lewis C. Ahlborn*	William Rugger*
J. H. Hill	Henry Stone	Schuyler Stevens
Jacob Brunner	Wardie Stone	Isaac Mahin
Frank J. Pattee	Claude Stone	Frank Mahin*
J. H. Ferris*	G. Elmer Hommon	W. B. Hannan*
Daniel Fleming*	Frank Hommon*	S. J. Eply
R. D. Bowen	Harry Smith	Elmer Wentworth
John T. Pattee	Abe Curry	Dr. B. W. Slagle
Vete Hutchings	Edgar Barger	C. S. Sargent
A. S. Kingsbury*	Verne Barger	Roy Sargent
John H. Detwiler*	Alex Montgomery	Frank Timmons
T. J. Wyland	John H. Moorman	Lee Starbuck
James A. Cameron*	Mrs. E. R. Smith	George Church
Paul Arnold*	Truman Badger*	Arnold Haberly*
Ambrose Buntin*		Kate-Hattie Mollison

A. S. Kingsbury

A. S. Kingsbury and Grace Simpson were married March 3, 1893 and Smith Center was always their home. Their children were Edith, LaRue, and Mildred. Mrs. Kingsbury died in France in 1930 and Mr. Kingsbury died in 1953. Their daughter, Edith Detwiler, is the only one of this family now living in Center Township. Another daughter, Mildred Lee, lives in Portis.

John H. Detwiler

Mr. and Mrs. John Detwiler moved to Smith Center in 1892. Their children were Rudy, Emma, Elsie, Eva and Eli. Mr. Detwiler served two terms as Register of Deeds from 1894-1898. He was in the farm loan department and a director of the First National Bank for several years before his death. Eli (Dutch) Detwiler is the only one of this family living in Center Township now. Their grand daughter, June McDonald, lives in Iowa.

James A. Cameron

In May, 1899, Mr. and Mrs. James Cameron moved to Smith Center with their 10 children. He established a shoe repair shop and made men's boots. Their children were Albert, Tom, Will, Catherine, George, Harve, Harry, Bertha, Gertie and Charles. Bertha Cameron was a long-time teacher in Smith Center. Catherine married Dr. D. W. Relihan. Of this large family only two grandsons are living, Charles Cameron of Smith Center and Red Cameron of Athol. Mrs. Doris Chamberlin and Mrs. Eleanor Hesterman, of Smith Center, are great grand children.

Paul Arnold

Paul Arnold came to Smith Center in 1874 and his wife, the former Lydia Ann Burr, came here in 1872. They were married in 1877 and they had nine children. The children were Edna, Edith, Carrie, Elsie, Ward, Clyde, Harve, Helen and Roger. The survivors, who still live in Smith Center, are the grand daughters Sylvia Bolton and Marjorie Barron. The great grandson, James Bolton and his family, live here also. Bonnie, daughter of Marjorie, lives in Denver.

Ambrose E. Buntin

Ambrose and Elizabeth Buntin moved to Smith Center in 1888. They had five children, Minnie, Effie, Emma, Charlotte and Lurinda. Their daughter Minnie married Ed Miller. Ruby Miller Smith, who resides in Smith Center, is their grand daughter. Their daughter Lottie, married Alex Ogle. She resides in Smith Center. Her children are Melba, Waldean, Treva, Walter and Beverly.

Daniel W. Relihan

In 1881 D. W. Relihan came to Smith Center to be Superintendent of Schools. On March 13, 1881 he married Catherine Cameron. He later enrolled at Rush College in Chicago and received his M.D. in 1896. He returned to Smith Center and practiced medicine here the rest of his life. Two sons were born to the Relihans, Harry James, who died in 1913, and Francis Henry who received his M.D. in 1910. He married Miss Bess Kenne on October 8, 1910. Their daughter, Esther Catherine, lives in Smith Center.

Henry A. Ahlborn

Henry Ahlborn came to Smith Center in the early 80s. He and Sophia Smith were married in 1882 and to this union were born three children, Ida Margaret, George and Karl. Ida Margaret was a professor of Nutrition at Kansas State for 15 years and one of the college homes is named "Margaret Ahlborn Lodge". She married Dr. Royal Montgomery. George, after graduating from Kansas University, lived away from Smith Center all his life. Karl married Katherine Relihan in 1908 and their children were Karl, Jr. and Frances Gripton. Frances Gripton still lives in Smith Center. Mrs. Karl Ahlborn lives in the family home in Smith Center.

David M. Relihan

David Relihan and Hattie Kingsbury were married in 1878 and moved to Smith Center in 1886. Mr. Relihan was an early day lawyer and was twice elected County Attorney. The Relihans had four children, Agnes, Katherine, Ted and Arthur. Ted, Arthur and Katharine still live in Smith Center. Katharine married Karl Ahlborn, Ted married Mona Derge, Arthur married Loreda Berridge and Agnes married Clark Weldon. The grand children living in Smith Center are Francis Gripton and Terry Relihan. Other grand children are Don Relihan, David Weldon and Kathryn Weldon Washburne. The great grand children in Smith Center are Janet Gripton, Dayne, David, Nancy, Kathy and Jimmy Relihan. Other great grand children are Judy Gripton Jenkins, Ann, Jane and Ted Relihan.

Frank M. Hommon

Frank Hommon came to this area in 1879. He and Clara Ellen Fletcher were married in 1893. They purchased a farm in Center Township in 1898. To this union were born three daughters, Mabel, Bertha and Mildred. Mabel and her son, Alvin Luse, Jr., and Bertha and her husband, Elmer Pounds, and their son Lowell still live in Smith Center. A grand daughter, Mildred Pounds, lives in Kansas City.

Truman C. Badger

Truman Badger and Clara Eunice Meachem were married in 1880. They had four daughters, Ethel, Genevieve, Grace and Ruth. Mr. Badger was County Clerk for several years. Ethel married Wesley Olson and their daughter, Irene Hooper lives in Smith Center and their son, Eugene lives in Denver. Genevieve married Guy Barrett and their children living in the vicinity of Smith Center are Inez Overmiller and Lorene Lambert. Charles, Glenn, Phyllis and Ralph live out of the state. Ruth married Mac Werts and had two children, Edith Jean and Merrill. Mr. and Mrs. Werts still live in Smith Center.

Joseph E. Werts

Joseph Werts married Blanche Culbertson in 1885. In 1889 they moved to Center Township, 3 miles north-east of Smith Center. Five children were born to this couple, Bertha, Lulu, Jack, Gwenevere and Mac. Mac married Ruth Badger in 1920 and they lived on the family farm until they moved to town in 1946. They are the only ones residing in the Smith Center vicinity.

Elijah Ferbach

Elijah Ferbach and his wife Harriett came to Smith County in 1886. There were six children born to this family, Ruth, Carrie, Mary, Edith, Helen and Walter. Mrs. Carrie Williams and her son Henry are the only members of this family living in this vicinity. Alden Williams is in Alaska and Walter Williams is in Oregon.

Ed Williams

Ed Williams and his wife, Adelaide Webster Williams, came to Smith Center in 1888. Mr. and Mrs. Williams raised four children, Clifford, Blanche, Cora and John. Cora, married Howard Rorabaugh, and is the only one of this family living in Smith Center.

William H. Hannan

William Hannan came to Smith Center in 1892. He married Linnie Williamson in 1892 and six children were born to them, May, Guy, Russell, Pauline, Howard and Lawrence. Howard, and his wife Ilene, are the only ones still residing in this city.

William Rugger

William Rugger and his wife, Nancy Buchanan Rugger, were married in 1879 and settled in Smith Center in 1888. They were the parents of eight children, Edwin, Ernest, Cecil, Arch, Katharine, Mattie, Thelma and Ray. The family still living in Smith Center is Phyllis Rugger Creamer, Mattie Rugger Smith, Thelma Rugger Colburn, Agatha Colburn Ray and Mrs. Arch Rugger.

Frank W. Mahin

Frank W. Mahin and Inez Dennison were married May 19, 1886. To them five children were born, Irene, Ethel, Ross, Hilary and Mason. Mr. Mahin was admitted to the bar in 1898 and he moved to Smith Center to join his brother, Isaac, in a law office. Irene Williams is the daughter who is still living in Smith Center. A grandson, Urban Ross Myers, also lives in the city. Mason Mahin lives in Maryland. Frank's brother, Elmer Mahin, resides in Smith Center.

Arnold Haberly

Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Haberly were married on September 17, 1890 and in 1891 they moved to Smith Center. There were four children in this family, Geraldine, Pauline, Ruth and Otto. Mr. Haberly was manager of the Smith Center Lumber Yard for 49 years, retiring in 1940. His son, Otto, joined his father in the work in 1922 and retired in 1964. Otto Haberly is the only immediate relative living in this area. Pauline Henderson lives in Arizona and Ruth Harper lives in Nebraska.

John H. Ferris

John H. Ferris, his wife Mary Genette, and their three children, John, Nettie and Minnie came to Smith County in 1874. In 1887 they moved to Smith Center when Mr. Ferris became County Clerk. He then owned a general merchandise store and operated it until he sold it to J. H. Dewiler and H. C. Smith in 1899. John lived in Oklahoma. Nettie married George Douglass and lived at Athol. Minnie married Warren Fleming.

Daniel H. Fleming

Daniel Fleming and his family homesteaded in Center Township. They left after the grasshopper scourge but returned to Smith Center. In 1880 he served four terms as County Superintendent and also was in the grocery business. Mr. and Mrs. Fleming had eleven children, Lillis, Warren, Will, Festus, Beulah, Flora and Fenton (twins), Mabel and Marion (twins). Carl and Daniel, Lillis married E. E. Dugan who had an abstract office and later a general merchandise store which he sold to E. E. Matson in 1907. Warren married Minnie Ferris in June, 1894. He was a druggist in the city in the early days. Their children were Irl, Richard and Marjorie Kirkland. Marjorie still resides in the city. Mr. and Mrs. Fleming returned to Smith Center in 1938, after being gone several years, and lived here the rest of their lives.



FIRST SODA FOUNTAIN in Smith Center in the Fleming Drug Store operated by Warren and Festus Fleming.

Fairs Started in 1873

Smith Centre was settled in 1871, Smith County was organized in 1872 and the first County Fair was held just 19 months after the county was organized. There have been four locations for the Fair, all in Center Township.

Elmer Pounds remembers his father, William Pounds, tell that the fair grounds used to be a mile east and a mile north of Smith Centre, in the southwest corner of the second mile north. Guy Barrett verified this by the fact that his father was marshal of the Fair when it was held at that location. Guy Barrett also said that later the Fair was held on a tract just north of the present site of the St. Mary's Catholic Church. The Fair was also held on the site of the Smith County Memorial Hospital for a few years.

In 1885, the daily admission price for the Fair was 25¢ for an individual or \$1 for a family or \$1.50 for a family for the entire Fair. In 1885 Smith Centre had a population of 600.

In February of 1903 ten men organized the Smith County Fair Association. They were Henry Williams, Frank Williams, J. D. Mollison, B. W. Slagle, W. H. Nelson, F. H. Burrow, William Peck, Scott Rice, Ben Baker and E. W. Agnew. They bought 117 acres a half mile west of Main Street (part of which is now Higley Field) for \$2,800 and began planning improvements, a half-mile race track, a baseball diamond, a football field, an amphitheater and stalls for race horses.

The first fair held there was on August 18, 19, 20 and 21, 1903. The attendance on the biggest day, August 20, was between 6,000 and 8,000.

On July 18, 1909 the grandstand at the fairgrounds burned down just a few weeks before the annual Fair was to begin. Arson was suspected. The loss was \$3,000, which was a sizeable sum of money when money was worth something.

The stockholders of the Fair doubled their shares and business men bought stock to build a new grandstand. On July 29, 1909, eleven days after the fire, a force of men were building a new grandstand for the Fair which would be held August 17, 18, 19 and 20. It was ready on time and seated 700 people. It was a 24 by 84 structure



OLD GRANDSTAND at the fairground, now known as Higley Field. It was an all-wood structure.

with a shingle roof to ward off the elements. A. W. Relihan said there were numerous complaints about the prices charged to the Fair and races - 50¢.

The fair grounds were sold in the 1930's or 1940's and then part of the original ground was bought back by the Smith Center Chamber of Commerce in the late 1940's. The field was operated as an amusement area until the early part of 1960 when it was given to the Smith County Fair Association.

Mayors of Smith Center

1886 - 1888 W. H. Nelson	1921 - 1923 E. B. Cox
1888 - 1890 Eugene Slocum	1923 - 1925 W. S. Rice
1890 - 1892 D. W. Relihan	1925 - 1929 L. C. Uhl, Jr.
1892 - 1894 Henry Ahlborn	1921 - 1931 A. L. Headley
1894 - 1897 J. R. Burrow	1931 - 1933 Miles Elson
1897 - 1898 J. H. Johnston	1933 - 1935 G. M. Stoops
1898 - 1899 A. S. Kingsbury	1935 - 1940 Seth Myers
1899 - 1900 E. S. Barger	1940 - 1943 R. W. McLeod
1900 - 1901 J. H. Ferris	1943 - 1947 R. F. Hoover
1901 - 1902 Henry Slater	1947 - 1949 Harold Beason
1902 - 1903 J. W. Detwiler	1949 - 1951 Arch Rugger
1903 - 1905 E. S. Barger	1951 - 1955 Ray Cole
1905 - 1908 J. H. Hill	1955 - 1959 Loyal Albrecht
1908 - 1911 C. S. Sargent	1959 - 1963 L. E. Nickell
1911 - 1913 E. S. Barger	1963 - 1967 W. H. Ormsbee
1913 - 1917 E. S. Rice	1967 - 1968 L. C. Kramer
1917 - 1918 J. N. Jones	1968 - 1971 Harry Jones, Jr.
1918 - 1919 N. E. Dow	1971 - Elmo Bennett
1919 - 1921 J. D. Flaxbeard	

Young Men Wake The Town On July 4, 1892

This story was taken from the diary of Clare Holmes, who was a young man of 18 in 1892, living in Smith Center.

"Several young men of Smith Center decided to wake up the citizens of the town at 4:30 in the morning to start the celebration of July 4. Clare Holmes was asleep when the school bell started ringing, giving the prearranged signal, so he hastily dressed and joined Ralph Barger and Theo Landman who had been ringing the bell. They went to Mr. R. D. Bowen's blacksmith shop, located where the Center Implement Co. is now, and the boys placed gunpowder on the hot anvils and soon there was booming loud and clear. After about 20 minutes of the booming the boys separated to ring the bells - Ralph Barger and myself rang the school house bell, Fred Wentworth rang the Methodist Church bell and Bill and Virgil Winslow rang the Congregational Church bell. After everyone in Smith Center was up the boys went home to do the chores and get themselves ready for the long trek to Park's Grove for the day of celebration."

Smith Centre Incorporated In 1886

On April 12, 1886 there was filed in the office of the county clerk of Smith County, Kansas, a petition signed by a majority of the legal electors of the town of Smith Centre, asking that the town might be incorporated, to be voted upon at the next city election and, at which time, a mayor, police judge and five councilmen would be named.

Said election was on Tuesday, May 4, 1886. J. W. Brandon, S. D. Cummings and C. D. Henderson were designated as judges and W. H. Nelson and John Q. Royce as clerks. W. E. Mosher, W. G. Reid and Henry A. Ahlborn acted as a board of canvassers. The petition was signed by the county commissioners, C. H. Lloyd, P. C. Glenn and Ora Jones with J. N. Beacon as county clerk. The election was favorable and since the spring of 1886 Smith Centre has been an incorporated city. The approximate population was 250 which classified Smith Centre as a third class city.

The first ordinance passed by the city government was the Ordinance of Organization. It named the term of office and duties of the mayor, the councilmen and police judge, the place of meetings and the date and time of meetings. This ordinance is still followed today.

An ordinance making allowance for a water works was passed in 1889 and the amount of money allotted was \$41,000. In 1905 the city bought lights from the Smith Center Mill and Elevator power plant for homes and businesses. The Smith Center Mill and Elevator put up the lines and power poles. In 1909 the city bought electricity for street lights from the Mill and Elevator. In 1919 bonds were sold and a city sewer disposal system was installed. In 1921 the Community Building bond was passed. In 1923 paving contracts were let to pave Main Street from the railroad tracks north to the present highway 36.

The population of Smith Center grew from approximately 250 in 1886 to 1440 in 1910. Since then, the population of the city has grown as follows:

1910 - 1440	1930 - 1630	1950 - 2040
1920 - 1640	1940 - 1670	1960 - 2470
		1970 - 2640



EARLY DAY PICTURE, east side of Main Street looking south from Kansas Ave. Note team and muddy street.

Pioneer Woman Remembered Early Days

In 1933 Elaine Lattin (Mrs. Ray Carpenter) was given an assignment at school to interview some person in Smith Center. She chose Mrs. Laura Goodale and the following is excerpts from the interview. (By the way, Elaine got an A for her work.)

"Mrs. Goodale, Laura Logan, migrated from Ohio with her sister and brother-in-law, the F. M. May family, in 1873 and settled on a homestead northwest of Smith Center. When they arrived her brother-in-law started breaking sod and they planted corn by using a spade or an axe to make a hole in the ground and dropping the corn then stepping on the sod to bury the corn. A good crop was raised in 1873 but the next year in July 1874 the grasshoppers came. The sky looked as if it were snowing and the sun was nearly ready to shine. The grasshoppers remained for 3 days and after they left there wasn't much vegetation left. That year they lived on buffalo meat. Delicacies were pot-pies, wild grapes and plums. Some of the pioneer women tried making pie crust out of cornmeal.

There were not any Indians to speak of except civil tribes who went through in the spring. Buffalo were plentiful until the people realized that they could eat the meat. Not many wild animals roved the country except coyotes, wolves and timber wolves. Timber wolves would kill horses and eat them. When the people found what was happening to their horses they would stake the horses out to pasture.

Mrs. Goodale started teaching soon after they came here. She had 16 pupils ranging in age from 6 to 18 in grades 1 to 7. The school house was made of native lumber but there was no floor or stove. Mrs. Goodale would build a fire in the middle of the room and let the smoke go out the cracks in the roof. She rode 3 miles to school on a mule and got \$10 a month. She would teach when the weather was warm and when it got cold she would dismiss school.

The nearest market was Hastings, Nebraska where they would take their products to sell. The first hogs they sold brought \$2.50 a hundred pounds, dressed.

They threshed wheat by clearing off a place on the prairie and put the straw down and had the horses tramp it. Then they would remove the straw and scoop the wheat up and let it sift out so the wind would blow the chaff away.

The furniture in the houses was homemade. They made bedsteads out of poles cut along the creek, the mattresses were made from corn shucks and the pillows from duck feathers, if you were "well to do". The bed clothing was a buffalo robe or a comforter.

Necessities were very high priced - kerosene was 50¢ a gallon and matches were 10¢ a box. It cost a nice sum of money to have logs split into lumber to build anything. It cost 5¢ an ounce to have a letter carried.

In those times it was very easy to get lost. There were no township roads. Mrs. Goodale's brother-in-law struck a wagon trail north of Smith Center - the only one there at that time in this part of Center Township."

Pleasures Of Early Day Pioneers

The majority of our early settlers were a sturdy, hard working people who stayed on their homesteads in spite of the fact that our vast prairies were often swept with hot winds, frozen in by blizzards or scourged by grasshoppers. Pioneer life was not all dark and dreary, the old settlers often told of the pleasures of their day. They had spelling schools, singing schools, literary societies and old time dances. Quilting, husking bees, house and barn raisings and house warmings were important social events. Visiting around, especially on Sundays, for news and laughter was counted a very important occasion. "Play Parties" for the young group were common events. Baseball soon became a popular game and croquet sets were set up in nearly every yard. Everybody was everyone else's friend and well-wisher. If there was a dance or other "social doings" people were there from miles around. The men especially enjoyed trapping for beaver, otter, raccoon and wildcats along the streams and on the prairies they hunted the gray wolf and coyote. The sale of the pelts from these animals often formed a substantial income. The wild fowl hunted were wild turkeys, prairie chickens, quail and pheasant. This hunting was a sport for the men but provided meat for the family.

In the earliest days the buffalo hunt was one of the pleasures of the pioneer men. In the fall parties of men with their teams and hunting outfits would set out for the buffalo range to secure a meat supply for winter. The buffalo were often called "hup-backed ox." The meat of the buffalo provided the food and the buffalo hides were shipped east.

A buffalo story as told by Henry Clark: "In September of 1874, while the family was eating supper, they heard the cattle bellowing. A buffalo was outside the corral pawing the ground. Mr. Clark, then a lad, grabbed a pitchfork, got inside the corral and jammed the fork into the side of the beast which galloped away to the south. William Barnes, who lived on the next claim, came riding after the fleeing buffalo. He overtook him a half mile south of our dugout and shot him. Mr. Barnes gave generous hunks of the buffalo meat to all the neighbors and Mr. Clark remembered the wild taste and remarked, "Oh, How darned tough!"

As the town grew and developed it became necessary to provide places available for public entertainment. The old stone schoolhouse was used for this purpose after it was built in 1874. One of the most popular entertainment buildings was the circular wooden Tabernacle and later, in 1888, the Opera House was built.

The Tabernacle was built on four lots owned by the City across the street north of the Courthouse. Home talent shows were given there as well as dancing and roller skating. Traveling stock shows were popular attractions at the Tabernacle. It was used for political conventions and the largest gathering was the one on the night that the Rock Island Railroad laid the first rail in the east limits of Smith Center in 1887. A very famous home talent play was presented there in September of 1884 with a cast of 40 local people. It was deemed a most successful venture!

The Tabernacle was finally abandoned and the Opera House, on the east side of Main Street between Kansas and Court, took its place in 1888. The Opera House was the center for attractions for years with theatrical troupes and minstrel shows performing before large crowds.

In 1912 Ed Miller bought the Opera House furnishings and moved them to the Miller Opera House on the northwest corner of Kansas and Madison. Mr. Miller sold his Opera House when the new Community Hall was built in 1922.

For years the Chautauqua was a most important social and educational event in Smith Center in the summer. The Chautauqua was a traveling group with programs of various interests consisting of dramatic readings, operettas, plays, varied musical presentation and orators, perhaps the most famous orator here was William Jennings Bryan. The Chautauqua was held in a huge tent on a lot across the street south from the First Baptist Church and was usually in town for a week. Two Smith Center ladies, who were in the Chautauqua circuit, were Mildred Cole Lull and Ruth Haberly Harper.

Negro Citizen Here In 1883

Vince Simpson, who came to Smith Center in 1883, was the only colored person who was a resident of the town for nearly 60 years. He always made his own living working at odd jobs for several families. During perhaps 30 years his work was mostly for the Relihan families and they looked after his welfare. They built a small house where he lived in comfort and happiness until his last short illness.

Vince, by his commendable ways, earned the respect of all who knew him. He lived quietly by himself, never attended shows or public gatherings, seldom conversed with anyone but was known to talk out loud when thought no one was near. After coming to Smith Center he was never out of town except once, when he walked to Downs. A former citizen there recognized him and called Art Relihan, who went down after him. Nothing was ever known of Vince's family, birthday or birthplace. It was thought that he was 75 when he died. With Vince in his last hours were Dr. Frank, Art and Ted Relihan whom the aged man had known since the days of their childhood.

Vince died on Sunday, Feb. 18, 1940. The funeral was from Simmons-Rice Chapel with the Rev. I. N. Faurot officiating. The burial was in Fairview Cemetery.

Early Day Rainmakers

In the 1890's the prolonged drouth discouraged the people and they were willing to accept anything that offered any prospect of relief. Hot winds blew over the prairies and crops were burned to a crisp brown. Then there appeared upon the scene of desolation certain individuals claiming that by their "hocus-pocus" they could make it rain at anytime. They were known as "rainmakers" and Smith Center was not exempt from their alluring influence. One of them was a local young man by the name of Rube Jarvis who established an outfit in the old sod house at the corner of Main and New York. A pipe was erected to reach 40 feet above the roof and from it would belch forth at specified times a dense cloud of black smoke made from a secret concoction. This was continued for several days but no rain came. Finally, after spending all the money the town had contributed and badly chagrined, Rube gathered his paraphernalia together and dumped it in Spring Creek. Other "rainmakers" appeared with the same results. Even the Rock Island Railroad participated in rainmaking schemes and sent a boxcar loaded with rainmaking equipment all along the northern route in Kansas. Rainmakers have since applied their science even to the present day but the elements still seem to resist them.



Looking east

Smith Center, Kans.

LOOKING EAST from West Court in late 1880's. Note old courthouse, former Smith Center lumber yard to the

right, old school center top and back of brick buildings on Main street.

THE TABERNACLE - Picture taken from court house, looking north. Old Methodist church block north on same lot as present church. Christian church now where livery barn is shown. I.O.O.F. hall - two stories high - seen over roof. TABERNACLE - Built in 1873 for floral hall at county

fair held on the George White farm, three miles north one and half east of Smith Center, his homestead in northeast corner Center township - section 1. Later moved to town by sections. Used for shows, dances, roller skating etc. Torn down in 1905.



Unusual Weather And Grasshoppers

1873

The great snow of April 13, 1873 was the most severe that ever swept the country, according to old timers. It lasted 3 days. No one dared venture outside. People were holed up in dug outs, buried under huge drifts, and had to tunnel their way to sheds made in the sides of the hills, where much livestock smothered. The 1873 blizzard was the famed Easter storm that so many recall in stories of the early days. There was considerable loss of life which would be understandable in this sparsely settled, almost raw prairie land at that time, when most people lived in dug outs or crude sod houses.

1874

Probably the greatest misfortune ever suffered in Center Township, and all of Smith County, was the grasshopper invasion of 1874. On July 23, the hoppers arrived by countless millions, obscuring the sun like clouds as they flew in.

As they landed they began eating everything green in sight. Every corn and wheat field and garden patch was a mass of wriggling, voracious hoppers. Even the trees were eaten bare of their foliage. Crops and even pastures were eaten into the ground. The story was told that the hoppers ate onion tops then went below the ground and ate the onions.

The hoppers remained for 3 days and then took wing and flew away, leaving a bare forsaken land with scarcely a sprig of green remaining.

Many of the disheartened settlers loaded their belongings into their prairie schooners and headed back east. But the hardy ones remained, made it through the winter, and the next spring were busy planting their crops again.

1886

In the March 2, 1912 Pioneer there is a story of another bad winter. This storm was on January 2, 3, 4, 1886, and was said to be the most severe snowstorm in the country, up to that time. Then on January 7, another storm struck with blowing snow and a temperature drop to 22 degrees below zero. There was 30 days, at this time, when there was no mail delivery. This was before the coming of the railroad.

1905 VIOLENT CYCLONE

On May 28, 1905, a storm of unusual severity swept just south of Smith Center. It took a course from east to west and was about 4 miles long. Big barns were crushed like egg shells, large trees pulled out of the ground by the roots and every windmill was blown to the ground. An ominous quiet and sudden alarming darkness warned the people of the storm's coming. In this city, people were compelled to light their lamps in their homes so intense was the darkness. Telephone lines were down all over the county - some poles were broken completely in two. The downpour of rain washed out the crops and necessitated replanting of acres of corn. One hundred thousand dollars was the estimate given of damage by the storm. A country schoolhouse was demolished, houses were wrecked, barns destroyed and orchards torn up completely.

The newspaper's advice to all people was, "don't forget to dig that storm cave".

1911

On August 2, 1911 Smith County had a big rainfall that resulted in floods and much damage. In Center Township, between 7 and 9 p.m., it poured in torrents along with a hard wind. An hour after the storm, water was running 6 inches deep in the streets of town. Telephone and telegraph lines were down, crippling communications. The next day the Rock Island bridge across Spring Creek and also the wagon bridge washed out. The railroad pumping house was turned over and the city well caved in, cutting off water supply to town for awhile. Trains were delayed two days then arrangements were made to transport passengers from one train to another by bus that would go to the bridge on what is now Highway 36 and back down to the train that would be waiting on the other side of the wrecked bridge.

The Chautauqua was scheduled for that week. Local transportation conveyed the speakers and other talent from the train on the east side of the bridge into town. The Robinson Circus, billed to show here a week later, canceled out their show in Smith Center.

1912

The year 1912 was a real winter with roads drifted full many times. One of the biggest snows was on February 22 when the snow came down in blinding sheets with visibility at 100 yards or less. Train traffic stopped. The heavy snow lodged on telephone and telegraph lines causing them to break. No mail came through from Sunday to Tuesday. The rural mail carriers could not carry their mail because their horses and mail wagons could not make it through the drifts. The weather caused a coal and food shortage. Then on March 14 another storm struck described as "the worst of the season." Coal and food were again scarce. Tragedy struck too, when Harry Agnew the young son of Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Agnew was struck and buried by snow thrown from a snow plow on the Rock Island railroad. Gangs of business men went around town and into the country clearing sidewalks and opening rural roads.

1935

The dust storms of 1935 are very difficult to describe. There had never been anything like them before in the history of Kansas and there has been none since then. The storms just rolled in as huge black clouds as high as the eye could see. The day might start as a bright warm day when suddenly these black rolling clouds of dust could be seen in the distance and soon the area would be as dark as night with the thick rolling dust.

The first, and the worst, one was on the night of March 15, 1935. After a very warm and humid afternoon the storm struck at 8:30 at night and blew until the next morning. Radio news had given warnings of the storm coming but no one thought that it would be more than just a usual dust storm. Many stories were told of harrowing experiences on that first night of the dust storm. It was impossible to see through the dense dust so there was danger for car drivers to move at all. People who were trying to walk home, lost all sense of direction and several got lost temporarily.

The dust drifted like snow blocking roads and sections of the railroad, it also built up drifts around buildings and machinery. The dust caused severe eye irritation for a large segment of the people and "dust pneumonia" was a common ailment.



APPROACHING DUST STORM. The first and the worst struck March 15, 1935.

These storms continued for several weeks with several days and nights separating the storms. There were some rains in the fall of 1935 and the next spring weeds began to grow that had never been seen here before but they soon died out. Wheat crops and other vegetation suffered great damage from these storms.

An eye witness report concerning the first night of the storm on March 15 comes from Nate White, of Ft. Morgan, Colo., who lived in Smith Center at that time; "When the great dust storm hit Smith Center on Friday evening March 15, 1935, I was with friends in the picture show. Sudden darkness obliterated the picture and all the lights. Outside the dust was so thick that it was like trying to walk blindfolded. In attempting to find my way home, I bumped into telephone poles, skinned my shins on boxes

and cans and finally got down on my hands and knees, crawling along the curbing until I could distinguish a dim porch light that looked like a candle enveloped in dense smoke. I made it there and discovered it was the home of Gus Dart, which was next to my own home. When in the house, even with the lights on, it was as dark as outside. The dust was so thick that it seemed the ground had actually erupted. My face and body were covered with dirt and my mouth tasted like I had swallowed a mudball. I was foreman of the Pioneer Printing Office and it took the whole force about a week to clean up the presses and other machinery so that the paper could be printed the next week. I will never forget that it was a dickens of a jolt to my home town but I am glad to say it recovered to bloom again.

Court Houses From 1872 To The Present

The county seat had been located in Smith Centre in the fall of 1872, which was an important factor in the development of the town. There were no funds to build a court house then so the county officers took care of their own books and records at their homes or places of business. There was not enough taxable land or private property in the county to raise enough money to build a court house from about 1873 to 1875. If a trial was necessary it was held in Uhl Hall, owned by L. C. Uhl, Sr., a small building which was later bought by the Ahlborn's and rebuilt. At an early election there was a proposal submitted to bond the county for \$2,000 to pay current expenses of the county, but it was defeated 181 to 132. Homesteader's, many of them just discharged from the Civil War, had very little cash to pay taxes with at that time.

The first court house in Smith Centre was a temporarily rented building, owned by Col. C.F. Campbell, who had it built for his own merchandise store. It was at the corner of Main Street and Kansas Avenue.

Col. Campbell moved to Kirwin and he later rented the building to the county for a Court House for \$5 a month.

From an old time story by L. T. Reese on the construction of the building is this quote, "When Col. Campbell was making plans to build in the new town of Smith Centre, the only lumber for sale in the vicinity was just rough lumber which was sawed over in Jewell County, so he decided to send to Manhattan which was the nearest place that he could get the kind of lumber he wanted. He employed 6 men who owned teams and wagons to go after the lumber. The names of the men who made the trip are: J. H. Hill, A. J. Watson, Jim Logan, Glen Campbell, Jim Oatis and L. T. Reese. This was in 1872.

The building was 2 stories high and had a dirt basement. The offices were on the first floor, a court room on the second floor, and a jail in the basement. The cellar was just a pit dug under the floor and was not a secure jail. John Kindred, the blacksmith, made a novel device to hold prisoners. This is Mr. Reese's description, "A horse power tumbling rod was dropped through the floor to the cellar and embedded into the earth, together with an iron clamp with hinges to go around the ankle and a heavy chain and padlock." They did have some thieves held there during the time that this place was the jail. Members of the notorious Jack Allen and Loss Miller horse-stealing gangs were imprisoned there at different times.



EARLY COURTHOUSE, the second in Smith Center. The first was downtown in Smith Center.

First District Court Here

The first District Court convened in Smith Center on May 5, 1874 with Judge A. J. Banta presiding. The court admitted, as eligible to practice as competent attorneys three men — L. C. Uhl, Sr., E. M. Burr and Levi Morrell. Nick Clemens was the sheriff. O. F. Sheldon was the Clerk of the Court. Other county officers were: T. M. Helm, treasurer; E. R. Fowler, county clerk; J. C. Latham, register of deeds; Edmund Hall, superintendent of schools; J. C. Harlan, probate judge. A divorce case was the first on the docket list — Phibe Cisco asking a divorce from John Cisco.

Brick Courthouse In 1887

In the early 1880's people began to develop interest in having a new courthouse, however at that time, the county did not have the funds. When the town company had platted Smith Center, Block 22 of the townsite, was set aside for a public square. Block 22 is the block bounded by Main Street, East Kansas, East Court and Madison. Plans did not work out for the square so the city turned the block of land over to a board of trustees who would sell the lots and create a fund to buy a courthouse site. Block 25, the present site of the courthouse, was bought and plans were started for the new brick building.

The contract for the brick building was let early in 1887 in the sum of \$5,000 and it was soon under construction. Disaster befell, when one night after the sidewalls were up and part of the roof was on, the walls fell in. The material was so badly damaged that the builders were ready to give up their contract. The citizens of the town rallied financially to raise \$1,000, the cost of the damage, to relieve the county of that expense. The city entered a contract with the county commissioners to have use of the courtroom as a place of public entertainment. The building was finished in 1887 and the county officers moved in March, 1888. At that time, the county commissioners had second thoughts about allowing public entertainment in the courthouse, and the following was published in the Smith County Bulletin on March 8, 1888. "We hear it reported that our county commissioners are not going to call upon those citizens of this city who subscribed to the last \$1,000 to complete the courthouse. They will take this money from the general fund and pay the \$1,000 and will be the sole owners of the building." The commissioners serving in 1888 were: A. D. Barnes, Ora Jones and John Brown.

Items from the 1888 newspaper which are of interest are:

"Al Hester, Ex-county sheriff, received the contract for moving the records of the county offices from downtown to the new courthouse. He has had lots of experience in moving and is the best man they could have employed for the job."



EARLY STREET SCENE.

"The county commissioners let the following contracts:
 Gates, Railings and Platforms \$60.
 Large Cistern (all material and work) \$125.
 Coal House and Outbuildings \$259."

The first marriage licenses, issued by Probate Judge J. W. Henderson, in the new building were to: Wm. Kugler and Lettie Lambert; M. H. McCarty and Sarah Mathes and W. H. Chandler and Harriett Welch.

County Jail Built In 1893

A jail, still in use today, built of native stone was erected during the summer of 1893. The contract for the building was let on April 24, 1893, for the sum of \$3,995, and it was ready for occupancy on October 2, 1893. When it was erected there were two stories on the front of the building, which housed the sheriff, with an ell at the back with cells for male prisoners. The front part is to be remodeled soon and will have cells for women prisoners.

Present Courthouse

The brick courthouse was a nice looking structure with a tall dome high in the middle of the roof and the grounds

had been well landscaped but, after 30 years, it was evident that the county needed a new and larger building. In 1917 bids were called for the construction of a new courthouse. The contract was given to M. C. Brady of Beloit, who had just completed the new high school across the street east.

The lower floor of the Odd Fellows Building, at Main and West New York, was leased to house the officers desks, files, supplies and a vault was built to secure the safety of the records.

Work on the new building started in the spring of 1918 and the corner stone was laid on June 23 with appropriate ceremonies. The Masonic fraternities of the county were in charge of the program. The list of contents in the corner stone were: Names of officers of Masonic lodges and Eastern Star chapters in the county; a roster of Smith County Companies of the Kansas State Guards; copies of the Smith County Pioneer and the Smith County Journal; names of county officers; copies of contracts for the building; one penny and a 5¢ coin of the date of 1867. The commissioners in 1918 were: J.L. Wolfe, Ed Shields and Emery Diggins. The building was completed on January 1, 1920. The total cost, furnished completely, was approximately \$98,000 and was all paid for when ready for occupancy.

Post Offices

The first building in the townsite of Smith Center was a small one at the corner of Main and West Kansas Avenue owned by Wait George, who with his wife conducted a boarding house there. The first mail that came to the townsite was left there, even before there was a postmaster. Mr. George was the first postmaster, appointed to this position in 1872.

L. T. Reese became postmaster in 1885 and was handling seven star routes out of Smith Center when the lot on which the little frame post office stood was sold to the Opera House Company. He asked the post office department for permission to move the office and was instructed to move it out into the street and await further orders. After much delay Mr. Reese learned that there was opposition between the businessmen of north and south Main Street as to its location. Meanwhile, the building was interfering with traffic as well as being in the way of the brick layers on the opera house, so the postmaster has the building mounted on wheels and moved to the center of town. It was jacked up on blocks in the center of the intersection of Main and Kansas Avenue, and there it stood for more than a year. Finally the order came, "Locate the post office on South Main Street, outside the railroad limit, which is eighty rods from baggage room door." Mr. Reese secured the building on the west side of Main, and that remained the location of the Smith Center post office until 1952 when it was moved to the third building north. In 1962 it was moved to temporary quarters until December 9, 1963 when it moved into the present modern structure.

Baseball Memories

(Condensed from a speech by W. W. Relihan given in 1955)

In looking back over 60 years of memory some happening or individual may be overlooked, I am sure it will be pardoned.

You all must remember that 50 and 60 years ago there were not the modern means of transportation that we now enjoy. Travel from Smith Center to other towns was limited to the train or the horse and buggy. Baseball was about the only sport that was indulged in then, when considered from the standpoint of team play, there were a lot of baseball teams in a comparatively small area.

The first team that Smith Center had that I can remember anything about dated back to the time when the railroad first came here. That was sometime after 1887. As of that time I remember only one game of note and it was between Smith Center and Phillipsburg and was played at Phillipsburg. The railroad ran an excursion from points west of Belleville to Phillipsburg for the game and a special car was set off here for the Smith Center crowd. Smith Center had imported a pitcher and catcher from Blue Hill, Nebraska, and several players of note were on the team. Smith Center won the game but lost the free-for-all-fight that followed. It was far more exciting than the ball game. At about this time, there being so many baseball fans here that Smith Center came up with a team of home guards. I remember the outstanding pitcher at that time was Mose Hollingsworth. Henry Clark was the first baseman and Bill and Al Mathes played on that team. In those times I remember quite well we always had a first and second team. The first team was composed of the older men and the second team of the younger ones. At times we would come up with a third team. The second and third teams always had a problem of getting baseballs and other equipment. We seldom had more than two

bats on the second team and were lucky to have a good baseball. We always made our own catcher's mitt. If we could get hold of a good pair of boots, with good toes on them, we had a catcher's mitt. It was not a very fancy one but it helped take the sting and jolt out of a hard thrown ball. The business men of the town bought the balls and bats for the first team.

The early day baseball playing ground was the third block west of Main street with West Court street on the north and West New York at the south. In the second block of the south side of Court street was the little stone Congregational Church and the residences of B. F. Winslow and Alex Montgomery. There was no fencing around the ball block, no admittance fees and no grandstand nor shade of any kind.

On the second team that I first played on was Clyde Arnold, Berry (Earl) Morris and Bill Stewart. We did not play long on the second team for the first team drafted us before we were ready for first team play.

About the time we went into the first team, Rube Jarvis was the local pitcher of note. He was a speed baller with a fast breaking curve and fast as lightning on his feet. Later in his career he played professional ball in the Missouri Valley League. One story told about him was that he hit a line drive down the first base line and while speeding toward the base the ball hit him in the back and he was called out for interference.

At this time of our baseball era Lebanon had a fine team. The rivalry between Smith Center and Lebanon was intense but we were never able to hold our own with that outfit. We won a game now and then but not very often.

In the spring of 1902 we organized a league out here composed of Smith Center, Osborne, Plainville, Kirwin and Kensington. Art Nelson, Dad White, Les Neal and myself were the pitchers. Others on our team that I can recall are Grant Hazelton, Jess Mathes, Ansel Buzzel and Harry Dean. We traveled from town to town in a lumber wagon pulled by a team that belonged to Buzzel. We had a pretty rugged time making the trip to Plainville, but at that time, we thought it was a wonderful trip.

Smith Center was developing good players about this time. Among them were: Clare Shrader, Les Neal, Lloyd Mathes (Big Lloyd), "Little Lloyd", son of Bill Mathes, Roger Coolidge, Merrill Agnew, Clarence French, Loren Weltmer, Wardie Weltmer, Marvie Hays, Marion Hays, Ed Hays and Charlie Barger.

At the turn of the century, the Downs Baseball Tournament was perhaps the biggest baseball event in Kansas. It always took place on July 27th. Smith Center participated in many of them and won our full share of first place money. One year we did it with all home grown material. Our pitchers that year were Dad White, Les Neal and Clare Shrader. Marion Hays was the catcher.

It was about 1908 that Ira Bidwell brought his Kansas City Red Sox out here, at a time when I was managing the Smith Center team after I had graduated from Law School. They were to play for three days for 75% of the gate money. We had written contracts with the Red Sox which I signed. Casey Stengel, later the famous manager of the New York Yankees, was playing with the Red Sox at that time. They were here 4 days, staying at the hotel. When they left town I found that I had not read the fine print in the contract and was stuck for the hotel bill. I had spent all the gate receipts for ball players to help beat them, 2 out of 3 in the series, and it took all of my money to pay the bill. I remember Casey Stengel telling me that a lawyer always reads the fine print. I told him that there was one who would from now on. Clare Shrader left with the Red Sox and played with them the rest of the season.

Two other traveling Kansas City baseball teams that came out here in the early days to play Smith Center were the J. J. Foster team and the Bruce Lumber Co. team.

At about this time the baseball diamond was moved to the ball grounds north of the standpipe and it was there for many years until the fairgrounds were built.

About the time I quit, "String" Niles, one of Smith Center's most capable and popular players, came into the spotlight of local baseball and played for many years here.

Big Crowd At Ball Game In 1900

A baseball game in Smith Center on Friday afternoon, July 13, 1900 attracted one of the biggest crowds of the year. The game was between Hummer and Smith Center and had been arranged as a result of a tie game at Park's Grove on July 4th. At the end of the ninth

inning that day the score was 8 to 8 and remained 8 to 8 through the 12th inning at which time the umpire called the game to an end.

So, at the play-off game on July 13 the crowd was tense with interest. At the close of the 4th inning the score was Smith Center 22 and Hummer 5. Then, the Hummer team began to pull together and gained rapidly until the last minute when Smith Center got an extra run and won 23 to 22.

All the players were strictly home grown Smith County young men. They were:

Smith Center:
Art Nelson
Frank White
Ed Moorman
Percy Adams
George Pickler
Art Relihan
Rudy Detwiler
Will Morrow
Ernest Fleisher

Hummer:
Pete Mathes
J. Miller
Dick Mathes
Ansel Buzzel
Pete Carter
Jess Mathes
Jim Buck
H. Shaffer
F. Herman



THE RAMBLERS, 1908 baseball team, all home players. Seated: C. B. French lf, A. E. Nelson, 2b, P. C. Adams 3b, V. Burgess cf, Roger Coolidge rf, Dad White p,

H. L. Neal p, M. Agnew c, A. W. Relihan 1b, H. L. Wright ss, C. L. Seeever utility.

Football - 1899 - 1900 - 1914

In talking with Art Relihan he told that the early day football players made their own uniforms out of materials that would surprise the present generation. He also told of a trip to Franklin, Nebraska to play Franklin Academy. The team went to Franklin by wagon, was entertained by the Academy, played the football game the next day and drove the wagon back to Smith Centre that same day arriving very late that night.

The names of the young men of Smith Centre who played a football game at Phillipsburg on November 18, 1899 were:

Will Dannenbarger LE	Harry Relihan RE
Frank Relihan LT	Danreith Bryum QB
Roland Christ LG	Fred Uhl LHB
Melvin Rinehart C	Rea Moore RHB
Charles Asbaugh RG	Otis Burgess (Cap't.) FB
Clyde Moore RT	

Dr. Frank Relihan is the only one of the team in Smith Centre now.

Smith Centre's first town football team was in 1900-1901. The players were:

Ray Taylor	Ray Wolfe
Harry Relihan	Roy Lattin
Vinton Burgess	Bill Dannenbarger
Otis Burgess	John Sweeney
Harry Dean	Danreith Bryum
Nelson Bryum	Theo. Lanman
Ed Moorman	Clyde Moore
Grant Hazeltine	Dan McCarty

Mack Werts wrote of the football team of 1914. The players were:

Lawrence Hammond	Dewey Hutcherson
Walker Lewis	Wardie Weltmer
Everett Garrison	Frank May
Hubert Smith	Fay Moberly
Roy Calvin	Glenn Lowery
Forrest Payne	Karl Ahlborn-Manager
Mack Werts	

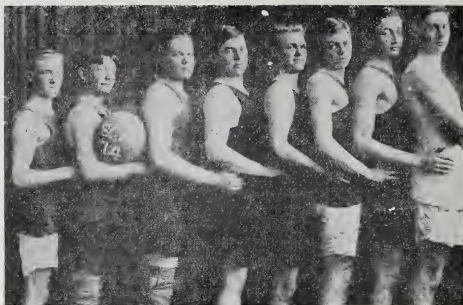
The schedule and scores that year were:

Smith Center 28	Belleville 7
Smith Center 14	Stockton 0
Smith Center 7	Franklin 27
Smith Center 0	Red Cloud 7
Smith Center 0	Jewell 7
Smith Center 0	Osborne 0
Smith Center 0	Jewell 18
Smith Center 14	Belleville 13
Smith Center 3	Osborne 0

For approximately the last 50 years football has been largely confined to high school football. A number of distinguished teams have been developed in Smith Center High School.

Basketball Started In 1906

Girls were the first to organize basketball in Smith Centre. The basketball court was an outdoor court because at that time there was no indoor court. The young men all played football until cold weather so the girls started basketball. In 1906 their first game was at Downs in a game which caused much confusion because the Downs girls played by men's rules and the Smith Centre girls played by ladies rules. They also played Osborne and beat them - they were invited to a return game but it was too cold for the girls to go to Osborne to play. The team members were - Crete Moorman, Kate Relihan, Mae Harwood, Eva Detwiler, Florence Reese, Crete Owens and D. H. Rose, Manager.



SMITH CENTRE's first basket ball team

In 1912 a boys basketball team was being organized. The boys bought their own suits, shoes (\$7.00 a pair) and paid all of their own expenses. The boys played any place they could put up a basket. By 1914 boys basketball was really underway in Smith Centre. The games were played at the Opera House and the boys had to move furniture before games and clean up after games.

At about this time a combination of high school boys and town boys started a Smith Centre town team and challenged all comers. They played a Kansas University team which traveled the State by train during vacations. The first time the town team played K. U. they were mighty scared young men - they lost simply because they were so scared during the first half and let K. U. get too much of a lead. They outscored K. U. in the second half. The team members were: Vern Albrecht, Nate White, Everett Garrison, George Myers and Jim Weltmer.

Fairview Cemetery

When Center Township was platted 40 acres of land were set aside for a cemetery and it was named Fairview. It is located 1 mile north of the city in the northeast corner of section 16. The first burial there was on January 23, 1873, an aged lady named Mrs. Nancy Lindley. The grave was dug by L. T. Reese, John Goodale and Tom Burrow. Ben Warwick was a stone mason and made the head stone from native stone. Two more graves were needed in 1873 and they are located in the third tier on the north of the south driveway.

Not many of our citizens of the present time know that at one time there were graves within the townsite of Smith Centre. It was before the cemetery location had been selected. The burials were in the late months of 1872. Waite George was postmaster and the only government employee here at the time so he gave his consent for the temporary burial places until such time as they could be moved to the cemetery. These burial places were in the northeast part of town and there were very few houses in town at that time.

The first tree ever planted in Fairview Cemetery and the oldest cedar was planted by Cale Lloyd on the grave of his 2-year old son buried in September 1873. The grave stone is the first one to have a date on it.

On Memorial Day, each year a service is held, at the monument in memory of the Civil War dead and to pay tribute to our citizens of the last 100 years who are buried there.

The Garden Clubs of Smith Center built the entrance and exit gateways and have been instrumental in beautifying the grounds. In 1969 interested donors black-topped the main streets in the Cemetery.

Community Hall

In 1921 the townspeople realized the need for a City Hall. An election was held to vote bonds and it carried by a large majority. At this time the Library Club had bought a small house and 4 lots from L. M. Dundas and had moved the library from the brick building on Main Street into the small house and had made plans to beautify the grounds. The Library Club and the City realized that this was an ideal location for a Community Building so the Library Club deeded the site to the City with the understanding that the library would be housed in the new building and operated by the City. The new brick 2-story building was completed in 1922 at the cost of \$36,000. The City was very proud of the new building with an auditorium, a stage, rest rooms and a City Council room on the second floor and a well-equipped kitchen recreation or dining room and the Library in the basement.

The auditorium of the new Community Hall on Oct. 12, 1922 was opened with a musical comedy "Eve". This comedy had just finished a 6 month run in New York City, carried a cast of 35 people, a car load of scenery, and several thousand dollars worth of costumes. This was the first time the show had ever played in a city of less than 10,000. It also carried its own orchestra. Tickets were priced at \$2.20, 1.65 & 1.10. They showed to a full capacity. Local high school girls acted as ushers for all of the numerous entertainments at the new auditorium.

The people of the town were entertained in the late 1920's and 1930's by traveling show companies, such as The Ted North Players, local programs and there were even wrestling and boxing matches promoted at the Community Hall. In the 1930's the Smith Center Little Theater gave plays at the Community Hall, directed by Carrie Peyden.

At present, in 1971, the auditorium and stage has been remodeled to serve as a beautiful and more adequate City Library, offering more room and added services to the town and county. The basement room, which housed the library, has been remodeled for the City Council chambers and an office for the City Clerk. The dining room and kitchen have also been modernized with paneled walls, new floors and new equipment.



Schools Of Smith Center

The first school class in Smith Center was a summer term taught by Miss Jennie Garrett in a rented room on the west side of Main Street in the upper story of the Uhl building, later the site of a hardware store owned by Henry Ahlborn and is the location of the present J. M. McDowell Store.

Five thousand dollars was spent to build the first school building where classes began in the fall of 1874. This was at the site of the present high school and was of stone construction, 2-stories high, with one school room on each floor. Members of the school board at this time were W. J. Jenkins, L. C. Uhl and A. J. Smith. The first teacher, paid the sum of \$20 per month, was Cordelia Niles (later Mrs. J. S. McDowell).

As there were no other buildings in the city at that time large enough for gatherings, church services were held in the upper story of this building. It was also used for prayer meetings, shows and Masonic Lodge meetings.

The next teachers were Annie Ryder and Ida A. Ahlborn, great aunt of Frances Ahlborn Gripton.

Edmond Hall Davis, sometimes known as Edmond Hall, was the first County Superintendent. In 1874, after holding office 3 years, Mr. Davis shot himself with a revolver. It was believed he came here from Maine and had deserted his wife and several small children and had fled from his creditors there. H. C. Ellis was County Superintendent for the next 2 years and then, Mrs. Flora Morse, Mr. D. H. Fleming was elected to this office in 1880 and again in 1882.

Population in the county increased in 1884 and in 1885 a frame school house was erected where the stone building had been. While this school was under construction, classes were held in the Tabernacle, across the street north of the courthouse. The new frame building, 2-stories high, had 2 rooms on each floor and was first used in the fall of 1885. Dave M. Relihan, father of Art and Ted Relihan and Mrs. Karl Ahlborn, was the Principal. At this time, a subscription school for overflow pupils, was held where the First National Bank is now located. Mrs. Heck, the daughter of Col. L. F. Sherman (owner of the Sherman House), was the teacher and the tuition was \$1 per month per pupil.

In 1891, one girl, Bertha Corn, became the first graduate of the Smith Center High School. Her commencement program was held at the Opera House. For several years the commencements were held there. Each graduate was expected to present an oration an essay or a musical number as part of the program.

The school house was enlarged in 1898, when three rooms and a recitation room were added and the high school room remodeled, making 8 rooms and 2 large halls. The board at this time was Alex Montgomery, Henry Ahlborn and W. H. Nelson.

Pupils and teacher of "Cookstove" school (Rising Sun, District 48) two miles south and two east of Smith Center (about 1900). Pupils pictured are Morton Yard, Will Simpson, Bertha Aldrich, Clyde Henderson, Mead Henderson, Russell Macy, Ernest Merriam, Beulah Macy, Lyla Yard, Musa Yard, Esthe Rorabaugh, Mina Howe, Charlie Simpson, John Merriam, Julia Henderson, Howe, May Howe, May Smith, B. Yard.

In 1899 there were no high school graduates as the course of study was changed to require 4 years of high school. At this time the salary for teachers was advanced to \$45 a month for women and \$53 for men. The Primary Grades were held for a time in the Odd Fellows Building on east Kansas.

Tom H. Hooper was Superintendent and Dean H. Rose was Principal in 1907 when the brick 2-story building, east of the frame school house was completed, at the cost of \$20,000. This building faced north, had a full basement and a heating plant. There were 10 classrooms, 4 on each floor and 2 in the basement. The enrollment in 1907 was 398. The high school and the grades were all held in this building. After 10 years the high school moved to their new building and the grade school was held in the brick building until it was torn down for the present grade building. Board members were A. C. Coolidge, Joel R. Burrow and H. C. Smith.

In 1918 a high school building was erected at the site of the first stone school building. This was considered to be very modern and up-to-date, with 21 classrooms, steam heat, electricity, an auditorium seating 600 and a gym seating 300. There were 201 enrolled at this time. Charles Wright was Superintendent and the board members were Carl Lowery, R. E. Henderson and P. A. Moyers.

For 30 years, from 1920 to 1949, the high school girls wore uniforms of navy blue serge pleated skirts, with white cotton middies, trimmed with blue collar, cuffs and ties. These uniforms created a feeling of equality during the depression years and made a nice appearance when groups gave public performances. In 1920 when these uniforms were adopted the board was made up of G. M. Stoops, Mrs. Ed Barger and Dr. C. C. Funk.

The National Honor Society was started in the high school 1925. The students honored during this first year were Ed Cox, Raymond Barnes, Vera Faye Stoops, Franklin Hahn, Mary Mahin and Donald Moyers.

In 1931, when G. B. Kappelman was Superintendent and Merton Otto was Agricultural Instructor, a vocational agriculture building was constructed south of the high school.

The school district was 5 miles square and was the 4th to be organized in the county, so it was known as District 4. Rural schools in Center Township were Shеды, No. 52, 3 miles east of Smith Center; Munsinger, No. 49, one mile west and one mile south; Little Crow, No. 5, 3 miles north; Logan, No. 139, 2 miles west and 2 miles north and Rising Sun, No. 48, 2 miles east and 2 miles south. Due to school reorganization in 1955, District 4 became a part of Unified District No. 237, which includes the middle third of the county. (The county was divided into thirds from north to south.) All the students from this section now come to Smith Center to high school. There remain two grade attendance centers, one at Gaylord and one at Smith Center. One by one the rural schools were closed, the last one closing in 1970.

A new grade building, which joins the old high school on the south, was dedicated in 1955. It has 13 classrooms, a fine gym and cost \$147,000. At this time the old brick grade building was demolished. Vaughn E. McCole was Superintendent and the board members were W. E. Lee, Melvin A. Collier and Arden Dierdorff.

A building to house the high school and junior high school is under construction in the northeast corner of Smith Center at the present time. This building is expected to cost \$1,695,000. When this is completed in the fall of 1972, the old high school building will be torn down and the kindergarten through grade 6 will use the present grade school building. The school board in 1971 was Pearl Conrad, Dr. Hugh Woods, Mrs. Joan Overmiller, Leland Lehmann, Dr. Kenneth Rundle, Joe Lambert and Dale Scott. Robert Wells is the Superintendent in 1971.

From the first graduate in 1891 to the close of the 1971 school year, there have been 2,811 graduates from Smith Center High School. The Class of 1934 had 69 graduates and this had been a record until the Class of 1971 which is expected to finish with 73 graduates.

School building erected in 1955 which was joined to high school building which was built in 1918. In this centennial year a new junior-senior high school is being erected at the northeast corner of Smith Center.



Commencement 1896

The 1896 commencement class had five boys and two girls. The exercise was held in the Opera House. The stage had been handsomely decorated with flowers and appropriate emblems. On a white background at the rear of the stage was the class motto "More Beyond" in large evergreen letters and under that the figures "1896". In front of this the scenery was arranged to represent a distant range of mountains.

The curtain raised at 8:00 PM with members of the school board, R. M. Pickler, Professor Mosher and the graduating class seated in a semi-circle.

Each graduating student gave an oration and the music was given by undergraduates. The program consisted of: Carl Johnson, oration, "The Stuff That Makes Men", Rudy Dewiler, oration, "Giants Of The Republic", H. A. Makinson, oration, "Industry". Misses Eply and Simpson, a duet. Edith Hutchinson, essay, "Action and Reaction". Will Henderson, oration, "Saw Wood and Say Nothing". Miss Emily Sanford, Instrumental Music. Eddy Wills, oration, "Ambition Or Truth". Miss Edith Nelson, valedictory oration, "Be True". (Mr. W. H. Nelson, editor of The Pioneer, tells of his real pride of his daughter's talk.)

The band played a number and R. M. Pickler gave an address. The President of the Board of Education, Alex Montgomery, presented the diplomas to the class. The quartette rendered a beautiful song and the exercises were over.

Miss Jessie Dean had coached the class in their orations and it was told that the "delivery and gestures made them appear to good advantage".

Smith Center Bands

The first musical band in Smith Center was organized in October, 1872, a year when many people, seeking homesteads, were arriving, and a year before this city was named as the county seat. The ten members of this first band were S. M. Travis, who was the leader, Dan Travis, Trube Reese, William Rall, Emery Travis, Tom J. Burrow, William Garretson, Hank Batchelor, William Hodson, and Andrew J. Allen.

The band instruments were bought at Chicago, Illinois, for the sum of \$200, with an additional expense of \$20 for shipment to Russell, Kansas, the nearest railway station at that time. So the cost price to each member was \$22. When notice was received that the instruments had arrived at Russell, Emery Travis went after them with a wagon and an ox team. It took him one week to make the trip down there and back.

In 1880 the band was reorganized and this time there were only eight members, with just one, Trube Reese, having played with the first band. The members of this band were W. D. Jenkins, Vern Webb, Trube Reese, Scott Elliott, Ed Edison, R. D. Prichard, W. H. Nelson and Ed Stevens.

In the late '80's Wardie H. Stone, at the age of 18, organized a group of boys into a band, called "The Young Band Corps". They were Charles Beacom, Albert T. Reid, Fred A. Mix, Homer Pattee, Will Hagadorn, George Reid and Arthur E. Nelson.

A band, named "The Smith Center Ladies' Band," was organized in the early 1900's, with Wardie H. Stone as the leader and instructor. This group of twelve young ladies played for many public entertainments. At one time they attended a band convention at Phillipsburg and their banner read, "This band, she's here because Smith Sent Her." The girls wore shirt waists, black skirts and white soft hats. The members included Mabel Boughman, Sadie Owens, Mrs. George Hendricks, Myrtle Jarvis, Kitty Harwood, Flora Bryan, Anna Harwood, Lina Owens, and Ruth Bowen.

Also in the early 1900's a Smith Center Municipal Band was formed. The band, under the leadership of George E. Hendricks, was called the Hendricks' Military Band. Their summer evening concerts were always enjoyed and drew large crowds down town to listen to the music. When the Smith Center Library Club members were endeavoring to raise money for the payments on the brick building that had been bought to house the library, this band was always ready to play for the home talent shows, ice-cream socials, etc. So later to show the appreciation for the music they furnished, the library club ladies sponsored a campaign for funds to build a band stand. Soon there was a nice large covered band stand erected on the corner lot where the Pioneer building is now. The membership of the city band often varied, but these were the members in the early 1900's: George Hendricks, the leader, James McDowell, Frank Springer, Harry Relihan, Francis Relihan, Arthur Relihan, Arthur Nelson, Ben Baker, Ed Wentworth, Bob Dundas, Clyde Moore, Ray Moore, Wardie H. Stone, Bill Simpson, Walter Stevens, Louie Stevens, Melvin Rinehart, Fred Uhl, Archie Coolidge, Vete Hutchings, William Mahin, George Pickler, George Reund, E. Dahlgren, Lou Lyon, Vern Hendricks, (the youngest member and son of the leader), Fred Hutchinson, Willis Hutchinson, and Ralph Hutchinson.

Later leaders of the town band were Merle Thorp, Jim Boyle, Glenn Wolfe, Verne Bowman, and Walter Stevens, who later spent several years travelling with the Miller Circus as leader of the circus band.

The first high school band in this city was organized in the fall of 1928. There had been a music department in the school for years before and an orchestra, but no band. Raymond A. Samuelson was the organizer and director. In the school year of 1939-40, the band had their first uniforms. It was the first year, also, that the band had been trained for a marching band.

The directors of the school bands since Mr. Samuelson are as follows: William E. Seguire, Marjorie Henry Page, Lowell W. Clark, James Martyn, Orville Huddleston, Lee Smith, Conrad Banbury, and Charles Yingling.



SECOND SMITH CENTER BAND formed in 1880's.

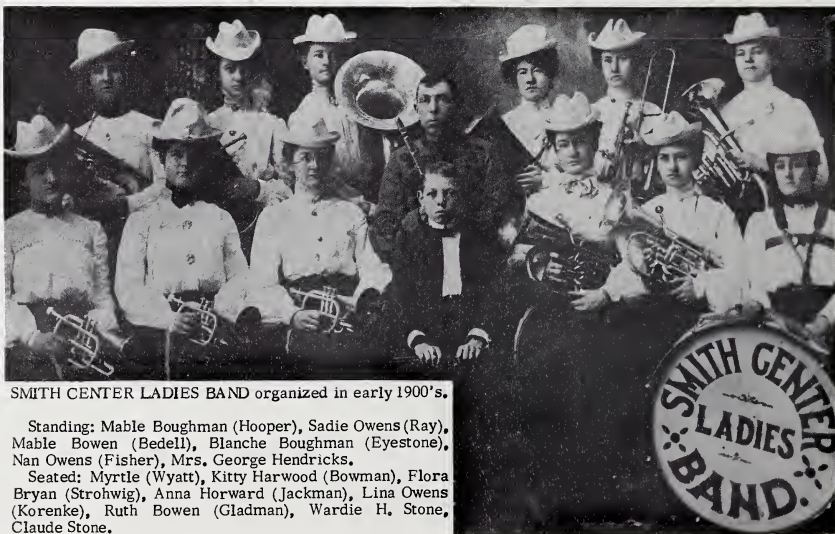
Back row: Will D. Jenkins, Vern Webb, L. T. Reese, Scott Elliott.

Seated: Ed Edson, R. D. Prichard, W. H. Nelson, Ed Stevens.

The flag in the background must have been 6 x 7 with 42 stars.

BOYS DRUM CORPS formed in late 1880's.

Standing: Charles Beacom, Albert T. Reid, Fred A. Mix, Wardie H. Stone, leader, Homer Pattee, Will Hagadorn.
Seated: George Reid, Arthur E. Nelson.



SMITH CENTER LADIES BAND organized in early 1900's.

Standing: Mable Boughman (Hooper), Sadie Owens (Ray), Mable Bowen (Bedell), Blanche Boughman (Eystone), Nan Owens (Fisher), Mrs. George Hendricks.

Seated: Myrtle (Wyatt), Kitty Harwood (Bowman), Flora Bryan (Strohwig), Anna Horward (Jackman), Lina Owens (Korenke), Ruth Bowen (Gladman), Wardie H. Stone, Claude Stone.



Water Supply Of The Early Days

In the early days of Smith Centre there was no public waterworks, of course, and very few wells in town. The first well in Smith Centre was called the "Harwood Well" and was located in the draw north of the present First Baptist Church.

Soon the residents of the city dug cisterns for their personal water supply. Often these cisterns, in dry years, would be nearly empty. Then tanks of water would be delivered on order. An ad in the newspaper gave the price of a tank of water to be 50¢. The water would be pumped by hand from the Harwood Well, hauled to the patron by a team of horses, so that price seems very cheap considering the work required.

However, the town soon had a well of its own called "The Town Well". It was dug in the intersection of Main and Kansas and manned by a pump. It was not long before a windmill was installed for the convenience of the public. Troughs were built on three sides of the tower where stock could be watered. On the south side a floor was laid half way up the tower, with steps reaching it from the ground, and it served as a band stand. This well was a great improvement but it did not provide fire protection. The windmill was torn down in 1886.

The population was growing fast and there had been several fire losses. The citizens of the new town realized there was a need for a more adequate water system. Agitation really got started when, on April 3, 1888, the Brandon House and all of its contents were destroyed

by fire, with nothing better than a bucket brigade to fight the flames. The Brandon House was a popular boarding house near the railroad depot.

Plans were started in 1888 for a city water system with a bond election which passed by 97 votes in favor and 59 against. The council who planned the system were Eugene Slocum, T. K. Clark, S. D. Cumming, J. D. Estes and W. H. Nelson. These councilmen finally decided to get the water supply by building a dam on East Beaver Creek on the farm of J. M. May.

Notes from the local paper:

12-12-1889 Iron for the waterworks has begun to arrive and the workmen in a short time will be putting them in place.

12-19-1889, Water mains are nearly in, the boiler and engine have arrived, the foundation for the stand pipe is completed.

12-19-1889, The water works dam again sprung a leak on Monday. It was found that dirt alone will not be sufficient to hold the great body of water that a 12 ft. dam will back up. They are adding broken rocks and cement to the dirt.

12-26-1889, Waste gates of the water works dam have been closed and the dam is being filled. The great steam pumping engine which is to force the water from the reservoir to the stand pipe has arrived and is being put in place.

1-23-1890, The great reservoir is filled with water and the children are asked not to throw rocks and clods in the water.

1-30-1890, Fire was put under the boiler and the great pump began to show signs of life.

The location of the standpipe was then selected to be at the east edge of the townsite. The standpipe was 12 feet in diameter and 120 feet tall. All was finished and water was turned into the standpipe on January 9, 1890. This was the first waterworks system in operation in Smith Centre.

In August of 1894 heavy rains caused the dam to break through. Much repair work was done but was unsatisfactory. The dam on Beaver Creek was completely washed out in 1899 and repair to impound enough water was impracticable.

Smith Centre residents were startled when on Friday evening, April 4, 1899, the cast iron pipe connecting the waterworks standpipe and the pump gave way, and with a roar that could be heard for blocks the water rushed down the slope toward town and gave yards and streets of those living on the east side a good wetting. It was several hours before the standpipe was empty.

In the meantime, the Rock Island Railroad had built a dam east of the city on Spring Creek. The city council started making test holes near the Rock Island dam in search of a new water supply. By spring of 1904 the water question was about to be settled. It was decided to drill a well below the Rock Island dam and pipe the water to the standpipe. So, by the spring of 1905, everyone in town was getting water from the Spring Creek well. At the time the waterworks was moved from Beaver Creek to Spring Creek these were the city councilmen J. H. Detwiler, E. S. Barger, A. C. Coolidge, J. E. Sappenfield, A. Haberly and C. S. Sargent. The population of the city was 1,223.

In 1920 the city census was 1,565. Most homes had water. Business places required lots of water. A sewer system had been installed and the railroad still had the contract for water use, so the demand for water became greater than ever.

Finally, a location for wells could be secured in the Solomon River Valley about 12 miles south, near Gaylord. On January 30, 1923 a special election was held to decide whether or not to bring water to the city from the Solomon Valley. There were 702 votes cast for and 82 against. Work on the plant started immediately. The councilmen at the time of the change from Spring Creek to Gaylord were Gene Cox, C. R. Peyton, W. Attwood, A. L. Cameron, Ed Miller and Frank Williams.

A second standpipe, located approximately 3 blocks north of the original, was built in 1952.

In 1965, a new main 10-inch pipeline was completed from the wells at Gaylord to Smith Center, with the old 8-inch line remaining as a supplement.

Fire Department

One of the most important organizations in Smith Center has been the Volunteer Fire Department. In the January 30, 1890 edition of the local paper it told that the water had been turned on in the city mains and now it would be possible to have a regular fire department. On Feb. 6 the first cart and hose arrived and a regular fire department should be selected at once rather than depending on whomever was available to help with the fires. Mayor Slocum appointed the fire chief and the assistant. On Feb. 8 the council passed and ordered published in the Feb. 25, 1890 edition of the paper the following: Mayor E. Slocum and Councilmen: W. H. Nelson, B. W. Slagle, D. A. McCuaig, H. Ahlborn, A. Collidge; that a fire chief

and assistant would be appointed for a one year period. The chief was to have complete control over the hook and ladder. They would call all citizens to help. Refusal to assist at a fire would be called a misdemeanor with a fine of not more than \$100. The hose company should be no more than 60 men and the hook and ladder no more than 20. The hose cart was to be pulled by the first person to arrive with a team of horses and was to receive \$3.00 for this service. The second person with a team was to receive \$2.00. It was a race between the local draymen and delivery men to see who could arrive first. The fire house was located on the lot where the medical building now stands and the bell that is now located in front of the present fire house was used to sound the alarm. Later a steam whistle was placed at the local light plant. The first engine and pump were purchased from the U. S. Wind Engine and Pump Co. on Feb. 1, 1890 at a cost of \$33.98 for one and \$77.23 for the other.

One night after the hose cart and equipment had arrived, the citizens of the town were awakened by the sound of the ringing of the fire bell and the cries of "Fire". The people hurriedly dressed and ran to the scene of the huge blaze only to find that a large bon fire had been built to demonstrate the force of the water coming through the hose and to make people aware of the new fire fighting protection. This demonstration was held between 10 and 11 PM.

No records were kept of the first members of the fire department but the records of 1917 listed the following men as regular members: Charlie Cameron, George Hoyt, Jake Hawkins, Clyde Arnold, Frank Timmons, Jake Davidson, Bill Weltmer, Bill Reed, Jim O'Neill, Park Ogle, Les Neal, Ernie Merriam, Vint Burgess, Art Rader. Fire Chiefs listed through the various years have been George Hoyt, Clyde Arnold, Roy Rawding, Roy Bolton, and Star Barron who is the present chief.

Later when trucks were available, volunteer truck owners pulled the equipment until in 1927 the first fire truck was purchased. City Ordinance No. 491 published in November 18, 1937 edition of the paper set up a new fire department consisting of the Chief and the Assistant and not more than 15 members or less than 10, no man to be under 30 years of age or over 60, At 60 they must automatically retire and become Honorary Members.

In July 1968 contracts between townships and the city for fire fighting service were signed by four townships. The city purchased a new fire truck and the old one is used for rural service.

The two largest fires in Smith Center were the Mill and Elevator and the Blair Theater. Another service of the Fire Department was their First Aid Squad that answered calls for help and first aid in drownings, accidents and wherever first aid was needed. Later a portable resuscitator was purchased with donations and was used in the first aid calls. Several calls for drownings and new born babies were answered, as well as calls at the local hospital.

On September 2, 1958 it was decided to erect a new fire house and use the old fire house on east Kansas Avenue for the city repair shop. While the new fire house was being erected on the lots south of the Community Hall, the fire equipment was placed in the Heidi-Christolear building. In a short time the new building was completed and all of the fire equipment was placed in it including the original fire bell.

Railroads

On the 11th day of November, 1887 at 7:20 PM, one hour and twenty minutes after the regular work hours, the last section of rails were dropped across the townsite line, directly south of the present school grounds for the Chicago, Kansas and Nebraska Railway Co., later named the Rock Island Lines. The men had worked late because a big dinner awaited them at the part of the celebration of the momentous event. Mabel Corn, aged 14, the first white girl born in Smith Centre drove the first spike. Then pandemonium broke loose and after that jubilee the crowd adjourned to the old Tabernacle, a large round building just north of our present court house. There a big bon-fire was soon ablaze and nearly everyone joined in the war-dance around it. There were people here from over the county to join in the celebration and to partake of the big feed. Our Smith Centre baker, father of Bill Slade, and experienced in the business had been employed to bake 500 loaves of bread and to roast 2 beeves. Besides everything served with this there was a large order of oysters and lots of crackers. The 250 construction men and railway officials were served first. H. A. Parker, the C. K. & N. president and M. A. Lower, vice president, of Chicago were among the officers here for the celebration. Young people of the town were there to wait tables. Not long ago, Jessie Pattee Gilfillan of Coos Bay, Oregon wrote of being one of the helpers that night and she was paired with Tom Cameron to serve at the big tables that were loaded with food. A big dance followed and it lasted until 3:00 o'clock in the morning.

The Rock Island depot was finished on November 7, 1887. In 1887 and 1888 five passenger trains a day were running through Smith Center both east and west. A hotel erected by C. K. & N., called the Ohmer House, was the largest hotel in Kansas west of St. Joe. The hotel burned in 1889 so the Rock Island Division was moved to Phillipsburg.

The first mail service on the Rock Island to Smith Center started on January 16, 1888.

In the fall of 1937 the golden anniversary of the coming of the Rock Island to Smith Center was observed with bands, parade and dancing. Mrs. Mabel Corn Masters came from her home in Toledo, Ohio, to re-enact the driving of the golden spike. Railroad officials and several men who had helped lay the rails were also there.

A super-speed train was put on the route August 11, 1937 called "The Rocket".



TRAIN WRECK east of Smith Center in March 1910. Wrecker No. 7 is on the job removing wreckage.

In November, 1966 passenger service was discontinued in Smith Center but freight service is still available.

Over the years the following Smith Center people have been associated with the Rock Island Railroad: J. M. Crosbie, Arch Crosbie, Ed Ford, Ed Chandler, Sherman Mathis, Vern Hays and Ray Rorabaugh, Ed Chandler, Sherm Mathis, Vern Hays and Ray Rorabaugh still live in this vicinity. Mrs. Ed Ford and two daughters, Bernice Ford Phetteplace and Mildred Ford Cook, live in Smith Center.

Telephone System Here in 1888

The first telephone service in Smith Centre was put into use in 1888 by a group of local business men who organized the Northwestern Telephone Company. W. H. Nelson was the manager, Elmer E. Dugan was the secretary and Carl C. Hendrickson was the treasurer. An ordinance was prepared and published granting a franchise for the Northwestern Telephone Co. to erect its lines in the city. The telephone office was located upstairs in a small building owned by L. C. Uhl on main Street, where the present McDonalds Store is located. Festus Fleming was the exchange operator and reported 102 calls on the first day. The hours were from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. and closed during the noon hour. There were 100 telephones and the charge was \$2.50 a month. After the system had been operating a week or so this item was published in the newspaper, "A telephone has been placed in the hallway at the courthouse and a system of signals arranged for each officer. If those wanting any particular one there will inform the operator at the central office who they want, the person can be called without disturbing any one else."

After the company had been in business for one year and one month this notice was given through a newspaper column, "The Northwestern Telephone Co. of our city has suspended business. This movement was made necessary by the demands of a large telephone company which claims that the system used by our home company is an infringement on their patent. So rather than go into a lawsuit our company submits and will discontinue. This will leave our city without telephone service as the prices and demands of the large company are such that our people cannot afford the pressure at prices demanded."

In June of 1900 the Exchange Telephone Co. installed a telephone system. Lines were kept busy all day long, the paper said. Many readers will recall that Schuyler Stevens was the manager for several years. The office was located on the second floor of the First National Bank at Main and Kansas.

Long distance lines were put up soon afterwards and the first night of operation the drug stores in Lebanon and Smith Center were left connected and the business men of both towns talked to each other for an hour or so.

A second telephone company, called the Farmer's Exchange, was in operation here in the early 1920's. It was claimed that the Exchange Telephone Co. did not have enough lines to farm homes. S. C. Stevens was the manager of the Farmer's Exchange during the time it was operated. The offices were on the second floor of the State Bank at Main and Kansas.

The Exchange Telephone Co. and the Farmer's Exchange merged and S. C. Stevens was retained as the manager. The new telephone system was called The United Telephone System.

The Southwestern Telephone System purchased the United Telephone System in 1938. In 1955 the Southwestern Bell Co. changed to a dial system. In 1967 the offices in Smith Center and Phillipsburg were consolidated.

Smith County's Horseless Carriage

by BERT HEADLEY

There are perhaps few people of a newer generation who are aware of the fact a grandiose plan was once conceived to establish a Horseless Carriage factory in Smith Center. It was an event of vast interest and excitement among local citizens and even drew attention from the manufacturing centers of the country.

It was in 1902, when automobiles were a novelty and just coming into use in the United States, that a company was organized in Smith Center, the purpose being to manufacture what was then generally referred to as "Horseless Carriages." A factory for that purpose was located on West Court street, Stockholders in the company included such prominent citizens as Bert Robbins, Joe Lutz, John Mossman, Henry Williams, John Harwood, Jim Mollison, Frisbie, Frank Hall, Clyde Arnold, Mit Stevens, Tod Reed and possibly others.

The incentive was provided by an unusual and ingenious engine which had been perfected, largely by Bert Robbins and helpers. It was operated by steam generated from a fire box in which was burned anthracite (hard) coal. The steam pipes in the boiler were not much larger than an ordinary lead pencil, but delivered considerable power when properly managed. Even in the hands of an expert it was something of a problem to keep the engine in operating condition. The little steam pipes were delicate and sometimes capricious, demanding especial care. They refused to perform when soot or dust accumulated in them and a tedious job of cleaning then resulted.

However, there was great promise of success and a patent was applied for and granted by the Patent Office in Washington. So impressive was the showing an eastern company offered a rather fabulous price for the exclusive manufacturing rights, but the offer was rejected, the newly organized company entertaining visions of an enormous factory to build and market the new engine.

To test the capacity and endurance of the new engine the company decided to install it in a vehicle. For the purpose they secured or built a surrey with gaudy paint and a fancy fringe around the top. In it they installed the new engine which worked beautifully as the surrey was piloted along the streets of Smith Center. Hope was high and grew with each passing day. Enthusiasm was rampant in the expectation of Smith Center becoming a great manufacturing center.

To demonstrate the commercial value of the new invention it was decided to establish a stage route with the surrey and make two daily round trips between Smith Center and Gaylord. With great fanfare the initial trip was started on a fine September morning. Loaded with enthusiastic boosters, Bert Robbins being the engineer and Bill Nelson the pilot, the trip to Gaylord was made without incident. On the return trip the surrey ambled along until it reached the Jim Betts farm about half way between the two cities. Then it balked and refused to turn another wheel. Expert tinkering failed to get results. Finally a team of mules was secured and the vehicle was towed back to Smith Center.

After that experience the hopes and enthusiasms vanished into thin air. The last known of the historic surrey it was stored in a shed in the northeast part of town. It remained there until dismantled. For several years the wonderful engine with so much promise was stored in the second

story of Henry Ahlborn's hardware store. What finally became of it is shrouded in mystery.

Such is the story of an early day dream that faded. Of the members of the stock company all have passed to the Great Beyond, who had a part in developing the only "Horseless Carriage" ever built in Smith County.

Good Old Days?

Some prices from the Sears Roebuck catalogue of 1897 which might interest our younger generation:

Gent's All Wool Suits	\$10.00
Shoes	2.98
Dining Room Table	12.00
Bicycle	24.95
Coffee, lb.	.20
Havana Cigar	.12
Silk Necktie	.19
Alarm Clock	1.40
Buggy Whips	.10
Ventilated Arm Garters	.10
Blacksmith's Anvils	2.40
Horse Shoes	.18
Moustache Wax	.07
Bar Trumpets	1.90

Before you get excited, wages were 20¢an hour, often a 10-hour day.

The Brick Yard

In the late eighties a man by the name of W. F. Parker had a brick yard west of town on the east side of the creek. Most of the brick buildings on our Main Street were built from bricks obtained from there. In October 1888 Mr. Parker built himself a 2-story brick home and a large brick barn on West Court Street at the location of the present home of Dr. and Mrs. R. C. Sheppard. In November 1900 the city council ruled that all sidewalks laid within the city limits during the next few years were of brick purchased at the brick kiln of Mr. Parker.

Pioneer Stores

F. B. Hough	Dry Goods
J. S. McDowell	General Store
Harwood & Son	Meat Market
Ed. Fowler	Furniture
D. W. Relihan	Real Estate
Vete Hutchings	Photographer
Morris Brothers	Livery Stable
Miller Restaurant	Cafe
B. W. Slagle	Drug Store
Willis Cannon	Druggist
J. C. Weyland	Real Estate
T. K. Clark	Furniture
Oberdorf & Agnew	Livery Stable
Dr. C. H. Nelson	Physician & Surgeon
Gus the Square	Clothier
E. J. Mix	Groceries
S. S. Hite	Jeweler
F. M. Terrill	Lawyer
Chicago Lumber Co.	Lumber Yard
Elmer Dugan	Abstractor
Estes & Barkley	Hardware
W. R. Morris	Barber
Arnold & Hester	Coal Dealers
Henry Ahlborn	Hardware
S. D. Cummings	Implements, Buggies, Wagons
D. H. Fleming	Groceries
J. J. Falkinstine	Musical Instruments
Mrs. M. C. Conlee	Organs, Pianos
Alex Montgomery	Harness
H. R. Stone	Money to Lend



EARLY DAY STORE in 1897. J. H. Ferris and wife had the dry goods, N. L. Morrison the groceries. Note the board sidewalk.

Business in Smith Center 1871 - 1971

In this section we have told of a few of the pioneer stores and have ended the narrative with brief comments about 7 of the merchants who settled here in the intervening years and who still live here or who have relatives living here.

We have prepared lists of the pioneer stores, some of the stores of the middle era of our century and a list of the 1971 businesses. These lists will give the reader an idea of the growth of Smith Center during the past 100 years. The establishments, which were written in separate articles, are not included in these lists.

Albert J. Allen was the first merchant in Smith Center. His store was located on South Main, where the J. M. McDonald Store is now, and his stock was invoiced at \$150. The second store was owned by R. K. Smith where the First National Bank now stands - his stock invoiced at \$300. The third store was owned and run by G. L. Gaylord until Captain J. S. McDowell came to town, then Mr. Gaylord turned over the management to him. Early in 1873 Colonel Frank Campbell erected a 2-story building on the corner of Main and West Kansas. The first floor was occupied by a general merchandise store; the upper floor rented for a school and, later, for the courthouse. Jacob Bruner conducted a drug store in a one story building, about the middle of the block, north of the square. He later added an upper story and changed to a general supply store. L. C. Uhl built a small hardware store. Ed Stevens, son of John, first owned a general merchandise store, where The Style Shop is now located, sometime after 1872. Later, Ed Stevens and John Harwood were in the grocery and meat market business for many years.

In 1874 J. R. Burrow established a general merchandise

store at the southeast corner of Main and Court. His stock was rye-flour, sugar, beans, tobacco and miscellaneous items. One day a band of 1500 Indians came through Smith Center from Nebraska enroute to western Kansas. They entered the store and took everything but a keg of molasses and a barrel of kerosene. They did offer "uncured hides" in payment, but Mr. Burrow declined them.

In 1880 Captain J. S. McDowell built a \$4000.00 structure, 28x70, 2-story and a basement for a store building. The building is where the Montgomery-Ward Catalogue Store is located.

Much building occurred in 1888 and 1889. W. F. Parker established a brick yard west of town and many of our early brick structures are made of the brick from there.

A. C. Coolidge came to Smith Center and went into the merchantile business with Robert Chandler and bought out Mr. Chandler's interest 2 years later. The store was named "The Red Front". The next year, when the brick Opera House business block was finished, Mr. Coolidge moved his business into the north side of the building and remained in the same location until his death in 1942. The Coolidge Clothing Store was an establishment of good repute with a fine line of merchandise.

E. E. Dugan ran a general merchandise store in the Opera House building, south of the Coolidge store. He sold it to E. E. Matson in 1907. After Mr. Matson's death, his son, Wilbur, operated the store and dealt in groceries and meats. Wilbur was the father of Lawrence who is now affiliated with the Boogart organization operating in Smith Center as Matson-Boogart. "Larry" is the third generation Matson in the grocery business in Smith Center.

The famous Model T Ford was sold in Smith Center by Jim Smith and Henry Williams in 1910. Sometime during the next decade, they sold out to Melvin Breon and in 1920 Jim Smith and Earl Shepardson bought the Ford Agency from Breon. In 1922, The Bonecutter brothers, John and Chet, bought the Ford Agency and operated it until January 1, 1929 when they acquired the Chevrolet dealership.

Arch Rugger opened a Men's Clothing Store in 1913 in the old Post Office building and in 1916 he built four buildings on the south side of West Court. Mr. Rugger rented three of the buildings and operated a sutorium for years in the fourth. Mrs. Arch Rugger and her daughter, Phyllis Rugger Creamer, still live in Smith Center.

The Attwood family, William and Alice and Roy and Della Attwood, bought the Buchanan Store in 1916. Mr. Mackey, Margaret Clark's father, was the real estate agent. The Attwoods were in the general merchandise business; later Mrs. Attwood had a Ladies Style Shop for several years. William and Roy owned the Attwood Implement Co. Lyman Attwood, Roy's son, took over the Attwood Implement Co, but sold it to enter the insurance business.

The first Variety Store in town was owned and operated by Leonidas Grubb on south Main Street. In 1918, G. M. Stoops bought the Variety Store owned by a Mr. Cleaver. A few years later the store affiliated with A. L. Duckwall Co., and operated in the north section of the present Duckwall store. Avis Stoops Tillman resides in Smith Center.

Fred Simmons went into the Furniture-Mortuary business in 1922 in the brick building where the furniture store still operates under the Simmons name. After Fred's death the business went into the possession of Dean Windscheffel, Dale Lambert and Carroll Kirkendall.

The first beauty shop in Smith Center was started by Mrs. Mattie Rice Steele in 1924. Six months later Mrs. Fleta McNary James joined as a partner and the shop was called the F and M Beauty Shop. It was first located on the balcony of the Hammond Store, then, in the Opera House block. When Mr. Bob Steele and Mr. Melvin Morrison formed a partnership and established a drug store, the young ladies moved their shop to the balcony of that store. In 1943, they retired from the business.

Early Advertising

1873

Pugh and Axton - Contractors and Builders. Painting done to order. Orders in undertaking promptly attended to. Caskets made locally.

W. M. Garretson - New Broom Factory - Now in active operation. Broom corn or cash taken in exchange for brooms - without discount.

W. D. Jenkins, Agent - Real Estate Agency. Farms For Sale - 320 acres - 50 under cultivation - 20 acres walnut and cottonwood trees, 2 years old under good growing condition. Splendid well of water. Good dugout, stable etc. 4 miles west of town, \$550 cash or livestock.

1876

J. R. Burrow, Prop. - U. S. Stage Lines. Smith Center to Red Cloud. Stage leaves Smith Center Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. Make connections at Red Cloud with stage running to Hastings, St. Joe and points east. Carry passengers and express.

L. C. Uhl - Retail Dealer. Hardware, iron, steel, nails, tinware. Stirring and breaking plows. Brown's corn planter.

C. F. Wheeler - C. S. Aldrich - Stone Masons and Builders.

1888

Paul Arnold and Al Hester - Coal Dealers. Price of coal now reduced one half. Now, \$5.25 per ton. Ten dollar coal thing of the past since Rock Island came.

1896

Attention Ladies! Mrs. Lester Sage is now ready to give benefit of a hair dressing and manicure parlor which she has arranged in her home south of the Court House. Business hours: 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Hair curled with a curling iron. Hair - 25¢. Manicure - 25¢.

The first mail in Smith Centre came in 1872.

The first band in Smith Centre was organized in 1872.



MAIN STREET in the 1930's looking north from the bank corner.



LIVERY BARN owned by Milo Staley and Carl Jones in 1906. This barn was located east of what is now the

Bonecutter-Hill garage on East New York St. Livery teams and vehicles are shown in the foreground.

Livery Barns Important Business in Early Days

In the early days of Smith Center, livery barns were an important business and there was never fewer than four in town. There was also a tie-barn where farmers could tie their horses for the time that they were in town. Traveling men would come to Smith Center by train and take buggies, wagons or coaches and teams from livery stables to all the outlying towns to sell their wares.

One of the first livery stables was that of J.M. Stevens. He had several teams, wagons and a coach, called "The Cannon Ball", which travelled to Gaylord each day.

The Olliff-Gatlin Livery Stable was going strong in the 1890's. They had at least 15 teams and would go any place and do anything reasonable. They usually got \$3 to \$4 depending on the distance they had to drive. One of their policies was to drive for the local doctors, among them Dr.'s Relihan, Jeffers, Slagle, Morrison and Watts. Gatlin and Erdman became partners when Olliff sold his share to Erdman.

The Sargent and Timmons barn was operated about 1900. They always had a string of good teams, sometimes as many as 12 teams. They made it plain that they would go anywhere. Jule Jarvis was one of their drivers until he became sheriff and, in later years, he was Probate Judge.

Tom Wince had a large livery stable where the Christian Church now stands.

In about 1908 Jim Farris had a livery stable here. It is believe that it was a continuation of one of the existing barns of the time.

Cale Jones also had a large livery stable but it burned to the ground at about the same time that Erdman built a large tie-barn.

In 1905, Milo Staley and Carl Jones bought their barn. It was located in the same block, south of the Pioneer Office. It was a large barn with 10 to 12 teams. The Wilson Furniture Store was next door and when they expanded they bought the barn. It was then that Staley and Jones bought out Peck and Agnew and they operated this livery stable for several years.

The barns faded out as cars became more common and this era is an all but forgotten dream.

The Merry-Go-Round Comes to Town

The first Merry-go-round that came to town was here a few days with a carnival that had most of its concessions on Main Street. The machine was located on vacant lots where the Smith Center Lumber Co. is now. It was a great attraction. Later, Joe Chance, father of Milo Chance, bought a merry-go-round and set it up at about the same place. Nearly all the young people and children of the town gathered there every evening. The children could ride about as long as they cared to at one time for five cents. The merry-go-round was powered by a horse and Mr. Chance changed horses often.

The Tabernacle served as a town hall, opera house, roller skating rink, dance hall and meeting place for other public gatherings.

The only sod house ever built in Smith Centre stood for 30 years on the site of the Bonecutter-Hill Garage.



MAIN STREET in an early day. The band stand is about where the Pioneer office is today. The building across the street to the right is where the First National bank now stands. The building mentioned was the Bryan House, a hotel that burned the night the Armistice of World War I was signed. The building was empty. J. R. Burrow, owner of the building, was in Topeka. They wired him asking for permission to burn it. "Can't collect insurance, if I give my consent," he replied. A firing squad shot out the windows in unison. Next thing, the building was on fire.

Hotels

Work on the first hotel building in Smith Center townsite was begun May 10, 1872, by Watis George at the S.W. corner of Main Street and Kansas Avenue of green cottonwood from the Salem community. The Georges moved in when it was finished, kept a few roomers, and served meals prepared in a lean-to kitchen. The first sack of mail delivered to Smith Center was opened here and handed out to those who asked for it. Mr. George sold to R. H. Zimmerman two years later and in 1880 a banking firm bought the building, remodeled it and the first State Bank was begun.

Hull House, a two story building, was erected on N. Main on the corner diagonally N.W. of the first hotel. It was leased to various proprietors.

The Sherman House was built just east of what is now the First National Bank Drive-In. It was a popular place for many years. It was torn down in 1943 and had stood there seventy years.

Joshua Brandon, wife and daughter Klara served meals from their residence near the Rock Island R. Station when trains began running regularly. Trains sent messages ahead to ask for as many meals as were needed. It burned in 1888. The "Bucket Brigade" failed to put out the fire.

The Ohmer House, built south of the railroad tracks and west of Rock Island Station, was the largest hotel in Kansas west of St. Joseph. The Railroad owned it and leased to the Ohmers. At that time, there were five passenger trains a day stopping in Smith Center morning and evening at meal time. One side of the dining room was mirrors and buffet where fine food was preserved in chipped ice and the hot food ready to serve when the train whistle blew. It burned to the ground March 12, 1889.

The Bryan House was located in the R. K. Smith building at the corner of Main and Court Avenue West. The building was sold to J. R. Burrow in 1905. On the night of November 10, 1918, when word had come that singing of World War I armistice would be official next day, the streets became

crowded with people. A message was sent J. R. Burrow in Topeka asking permission to burn the old structure as sort of a celebration. The reply was, "I cannot collect insurance if I consent." Soon a line of soldier boys who happened to be home, formed a firing squad and under orders from a leader shot in unison until no windows were left. Later that same night the Old Bryan Hotel burned to the ground. Men and women alike tossed their hats into the fire in joyful merriment that the war was over.

Aaron Shurtleff built a small, two-story frame building where the Center Theatre now stands on South Main in the early 1900's. Some years later it was razed and a garage building put there and operated by Geo. Hammond.

After 1889 Mr. and Mrs. Frank Maxwell furnished the brick building, originally built by M. A. Long for a Banking House and is now the Odd Fellow Hall, for a hotel. Sleeping rooms were on the second floor, the office at the corner entrance, and the dining room where Bob Van Wey has a Recreation Parlor.

Belle and Charles Erdman bought the hotel in the first block east of Main on Kansas Avenue (North) in 1919. Mrs. Erdman had operated the Shurtleff Hotel a short time before this. The Erdman Hotel was enlarged in 1930. After the death of Mr. Erdman, Mrs. Erdman operated the hotel until March of 1967 at which time it was bought by Kelly and Velma Ormsbee and named the Ormsbee Hotel. It is the only hotel in town, but we have four nice motels on "36" Highway off North Main.

Mill and Elevator

During the 1890's, as our town and surrounding county grew, it became essential to have a mill and elevator. A large number of citizens promoted the project and became the stockholders. As a result, a large building was constructed in 1898 and 1899. The Mill and Elevator was located near the new Rock Island depot. J. F. Hall, a miller, moved here from Lebanon and became the first manager. The new firm was successful and financially sound and a new tile elevator was erected in 1905. Eagle Brand flour was milled and packaged here for sale in this area.

In the next few years, the mill and elevator added the electric power plant. On March 14, 1916 the stockholders Wilson Ross, W. H. Lyon, Gus Weltmer, John Overmiller and H. G. Moberly met to reorganize as the Smith Center Cooperative Grain Co. and named a superintendent for each of the departments — the mill, the elevator and the electric power plant.

The city purchased electric power from the Mill and Elevator and in 1927 the Kansas Power began to furnish electricity to the patrons of the town.

Disaster befell the Mill and Elevator on January 7, 1937 when they were destroyed by fire, leaving only the tile and concrete walls standing. In 1937 a new elevator building was erected and ready for business on June 10, 1937. The mill part was not rebuilt and the flour milling business was discontinued. Employees at this time were Frank Johnson, Win Phetteplace, Charles Rogers, Donald Rogers, Fred Wolverton and Oren Flint.

In 1954 a new concrete elevator was built to provide storage of the abundant wheat crops. The present Smith Center Co-op Mill and Elevator has a total storage capacity of 530,000 bushels. The lights on the top of the elevator, the tallest building in town, are called "Clearance Lights For Aircraft".

Managers through the years have been J. F. Hall, Harvey Pratt, George Marty, Harvey Moberly, Frank Johnson, W. G. Henrichs, Oren Flint and Eddie Hall.

Cafes

In the early days of Smith Center boarding houses provided the necessary eating establishments, prior to the opening of cafes. The first boarding houses were operated by the A. J. Watsons and the Waitus George's in 1872. During the 1890's Mrs. C. L. Livermore boarded 11 popular young bachelor businessmen at her home 1 block north of the Presbyterian church.

By 1900 U. O. Smith and Marvin Aldrich had a cafe on South Main Street. When Dr. Slagle, A.M. Rinehart and A. S. Kingsbury decided to build two 2-story brick buildings on the lot, the frame cafe was moved into the street. An ad in the Pioneer read "We are out in the street but not out of business."

When Glenn Stoops was married in 1904 he owned and operated the "Red Front Cafe" on the east side of Main Street. Soon after this he sold the cafe to Alex Ogle and Mr. Ogle operated cafes, in several locations, until 1927.

One of the most popular cafes in Smith Center from 1921 until the late 1940's was the Bon Ton Cafe, owned and operated by Seth and Ethel Myers. In 1921 they bought a small cafe and cigar factory from Fred Wilson (Sylvia Bolton's uncle) and remodeled the building. In a letter from Dorothea Myers Thompson of Topeka she tells that the water was furnished from a cistern and put in a stone water cooler with a piece of "pond-ice" in it. She also said that the meals were 35¢ and 40¢.

Other Smith Center cafe owners were Bill Clark, Jim Nevin's Tip Ton Cafe and the Christensen Hamburger Inn.

Jim Robertson and Kenneth Tallman opened the original Center Cafe in 1929 in the building where Clint Buss has his Shoe and Plant Shop now. The Center Cafe was moved to the present location and some of the owners were Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Cummings, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Bolton and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Gilpin. The Gilpins sold the cafe in 1970 to Lucille Cowan who renamed it Lucille's Diner.

Paul and Gleam Manchester moved their restaurant from Lebanon to Smith Center in 1950 and were located at the corner of Main and East Kansas. In 1954 they opened Paul's Cafe and Dining Room on Highway 36. For a time they operated both cafes but sold the downtown location in 1956. They also owned and operated the A and W Drive-In. In 1967 they sold Paul's Cafe and Dining Room to the present owners, Jerry and Joan Lee. Paul Manchester had a restaurant license for 42 years.

In October, 1966, Elvin Lambert opened the Pizza Place, just north of the theater. Velma and Kelley Ormsbee built a new cafe, east of their hotel, and opened in August of 1967. Paul Gilpin now has a cafe on Highway 36.

For several years "Pete's Cafe" on Highway 36 was popular restaurant in Smith Center. It was owned by Mr. and Mrs. Arlie Peterson and Mr. and Mrs. Wendall Peterson. In 1969 the cafe closed and the Peterson's started the Arlwin Manufacturing Co. in the remodeled cafe building.

The Ahlborn Hardware Store was finished the latter part of 1887 and on January 2, 1888 a big dance was held there with the Stone Orchestra furnishing the music.

The Story of the Lumber Yards

In the early days of the settling of this area, lumber was a very scarce commodity. Housing consisted mainly of dug-outs and sod houses. What little lumber was used was hauled great distances by horse and wagon. In have heard Old Timers mention hauling from Blue Rapids and Hastings. From 1880 to 1900 the land was homesteaded fast and there was a settler on nearly every quarter section and lumber yards did a thriving business. When the railroad came through Smith Center, in 1887, the Chicago Lumber Co. under the management of C. D. Hendricks, was already established and doing a thriving business. In that same year, a Mr. Henry Cadle opened up a new yard. In 1890, El Stevens opened up a yard on the lots north of what is now the Harry Jones Tractor Sales. Later that year, the Chicago Lumber Co. bought out Mr. Stevens. The Chicago Lumber Co. was located where the Mid West Lumber Co. now stands, with offices on the east alley facing Court Street, with coal scales in the alley and coal bins where the Medical Center now stands.

By 1890 the Chicago Lumber Co. had succeeded in buying all the small yards and consolidated them all in to one. A. Haberly was brought in as manager in 1891 and had it all his own way for the balance of that decade. There being no elevators here at that time, it was only natural that he should put his coal scales to use and buy the farmer's wheat which they would scoop directly into the cars for shipping to the Kansas City market. He kept abreast of the market through the Kansas City Star (which cost the fancy price of \$1.20 per year). In a year of so, there was an elevator built south of the tracks and he quit the grain business.

Quail Hunter in 1897

This item is copied from the Pioneer issued October 28, 1897. "The Sportsmen around here are none too friendly with Lee Starbuck these days. It appears that Lee has a cinch on all quails in the county and no one else can get any of them. Other crack shots will go out half a day returning with nothing. But Lee, along toward evening will calmly light his cob pipe, drive around town a few minutes. Then he is suddenly missing and in the course of an hour can be found over home taking 2 or 3 dozen quails cut of his buggy - and never cracking a smile either."

The Kelly Cigar Factory was operating in Smith Centre in the early 1900's.

In 1907 there were 2 Electric Movies in town.

Rollo Faulkner, a cousin of Elmer Pounds, was the first person to drown in Rock Island Lake when he was swimming with Frank Springer and John Newton.

In 1971 the two Smith Center banks had assets of more than 21 million dollars.

The first building was erected in this city of green cottonwood lumber from a sawmill near Old Salem in 1872.

Smith Centre was designated county seat in 1873 - Smith Centre got 275 votes, Cedarville got 92 votes and Gaylord got 81 votes.

Banks

Eight different banking firms have done business in Smith Center since the founding of the town. Listed would be The Peoples Bank, Bank of Smith Center, Farmers Banking Company, Farmers and Merchants, State Exchange, Farmers State, Smith County State, and First National.

The Peoples Bank was organized in 1881 by George W. White and J. R. Burrow. Then in 1886 the First National Bank was organized, and had as the board of directors, J. R. Burrow, W. H. Nelson, J. S. McDowell, E. S. Barger, L. C. Uhl, J. N. Beacom, and E. E. Parker. The little frame one story building was replaced in 1889 with a building of brick and stone which still stands at the corner of Main and East Kansas Avenue. After occupying this building for more than forty years, the First National Bank again built a new building at the corner of Main and West Court. This bank is the oldest chartered in Smith County operating today.

The First State Bank of Bellaire merged with the First National Bank in Smith Center on July 20, 1931. Robert W. McLeod, who had been the vice-president at Bellaire, came here at that time and in 1939 was named vice-president and cashier.

The First State Bank of Athol merged with the First National Bank at Smith Center on October 5, 1933. August E. Ottomann came to Smith Center to assume the duties as assistant cashier and later became vice-president.

The First National Bank of Smith Center has had only five presidents since it was chartered in 1886. The first, J. R. Burrow, served for forty five years. Then Mac H. Hill, a vice-president, served as president from 1931 until 1939 when local men purchased his interests and those of the Burrows estate. The new directors elected A. L. Headley for president and he served from 1939 to 1964. W. G. Henrichs served as the next president having been with the bank since 1941. Russell Hill began his duties at the First National in 1942 and became president in 1967.

The First National Bank added a Motor Drive-In facility to the bank in 1962. The Motor Bank is located at the corner of Main and East Court.

The beginning of the Smith County State Bank actually was in June 1880, when N. S. Field and his son, W. S. Field of Albion, New York, organized the Smith County Bank. In 1882 John Hall and O. U. Sheldon, both also from the state of New York, purchased the entire bank stock. The building housing this bank from the first, was located at the southwest corner of Main and Kansas Avenue, a part of it having been the first building in Smith Center.

The bank owned two teams and buggies which were used in making inspections of farms for loans.

In 1887 Hall and Sheldon nationalized the bank and named it the Smith County National Bank. Levi Waite of Fort Ann, New York, replaced Hall and the institution remained under the same management until June 1899, when a charter was secured from the state and the name was changed to the Smith County State Bank.

Levi Waite became president of the bank at this time and Willis Cannon, the cashier. These two men, along with F. M. May, James D. Mollison, and David M. Relihan,

were the original stockholders. In reality the present State Bank had its origin in 1880, but technically the charter was granted in June 1899.

In 1897 a large brick two story building was built at the same location, and the old building was moved.

The Smith County State Bank was sold in 1911 to C. A. Garrison and Parm A. Moyers, from Hill City. These men operated the bank until March 1st, 1922 when they sold their interests to Andrew Lull of Lebanon. He assumed the responsibilities of president of the bank and coming with him to take part in its management was his son, Floyd, and son-in-law, Claude Diehl.

In January, 1924 the State Bank moved into their new building at the corner of Main and East Court.

Since 1922, when the Lulls purchased controlling interest of the Smith County State Bank, three generations of the Lull family have been named as president; Andrew Lull from 1922 to 1941, his son, Floyd E. Lull from 1941 to 1959, and Linton Lull, who became president January 1, 1959.

Both banks have remodeled extensively in recent years and are among the finest establishments of their kind in this section of Kansas.

The Farmers State Bank of Smith Center was chartered in 1918, with Charles H. Sargent as president. In 1922 a Kansas City firm bought controlling interest and Phillip Albrecht was named president. On November 1, 1923 the doors of the Farmers State Bank were closed.

In May 1886, Reid Brothers had a money loaning institution which was named the Bank of Smith Center. Alex Halter was president in 1888 and S. M. Wilcox, cashier. This bank became known as the Farmers and Merchants Bank in 1890 with Henry Stone as president.

Another bank started business in Smith Center March 20, 1890 and was named the State Exchange Bank. The first president's name was Huddleston with E. E. Dugan as cashier. Then L. J. Dunn was President and C. S. Barrett, cashier. This bank closed in 1892.



MAIN STREET in 1937. Note tell-tale models of cars parked near the Pioneer corner.

Smith Center's Only Bank Robbery

Three men armed with sub-machine guns robbed the First National Bank in Smith Center on Friday, February 1, 1935. They entered the bank at about 3:00 P. M. and yelled "This is a hold-up, get your hands up". The patrons were herded into a corner of the room. Two of the robbers held guns on everyone and the third robber gathered up the currency. Then, they took the bank force with them as they escaped. One of the employees had stepped on a silent alarm which notified the State Bank across the street. The hostages were Mac Hill, R. W. McLeod, A. E. Otteman, Alta Brown Hamlin, Mildred Ford Cook and Gerald Conn.

The girls were ordered inside the car and the four men of the bank rode on the running boards. The bandits drove south down Main Street but their direction was changed by a train blocking the street so they turned around, drove back through town and headed east. They released the men near the Rock Island Lake Dam. They drove east to Sheddly Road and turned north where they could not pass a house being moved down the road. The house was being moved by Leonard and Arlie Peterson. Arlie said that the robbers called for them to move the house off the road or they would "blow their heads off" and showed the Peterson brothers their guns. The building was soon moved out of the way.

The girls were released a little further down the road and Roy Bolton, who was following the bandit car, picked them up.

The robbers got \$2,500 and Mac Hill's diamond ring. Two of the robbers were caught and imprisoned but the third one has never been apprehended.

One amusing recollection of the robbery was that of Mrs. Roy Bolton. She was on her way into the bank just as the robbers were escaping with their hostages. Mrs. Bolton said she beat a hasty retreat to their store. She frantically told her husband, Roy, that the bank was being robbed; he called the sheriff who had been notified by the State Bank.

Roger Headley and Nate White armed themselves with high-powered rifles and headed out southwest of town while the bandits went northeast. To this day, people can't decide whether they were hunting the robbers or were just "chicken"!

Early Editor Tells Them Off in 1872

The early day editors of newspapers were a breed apart and spared no effort to express their opinions. If they were "For or agin" they let their readers know. Their language was at times flowery and at times vitriolic as is the case in the following story written by an early day editor in this area. "If the onery, lousy, pusillanimous, low-lived pup of the hottest place imaginable who stole our pencil don't return it or it's equivalent we shall mildly reprimand him. We paid our last nickel for the pencil and we have use for it!"

Do you remember when people went ice-skating, swimming and boating at Rock Island Lake?

The Cathedral Chimes in the Methodist Church were presented by Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Lull in 1938.

Smith Center's Newspapers

Smith Center has had its share of newspapers, no less than eleven over the years. Some have been of short duration.

It's first newspaper, the Smith County Pioneer, is still in existence and the oldest business enterprise in the county.

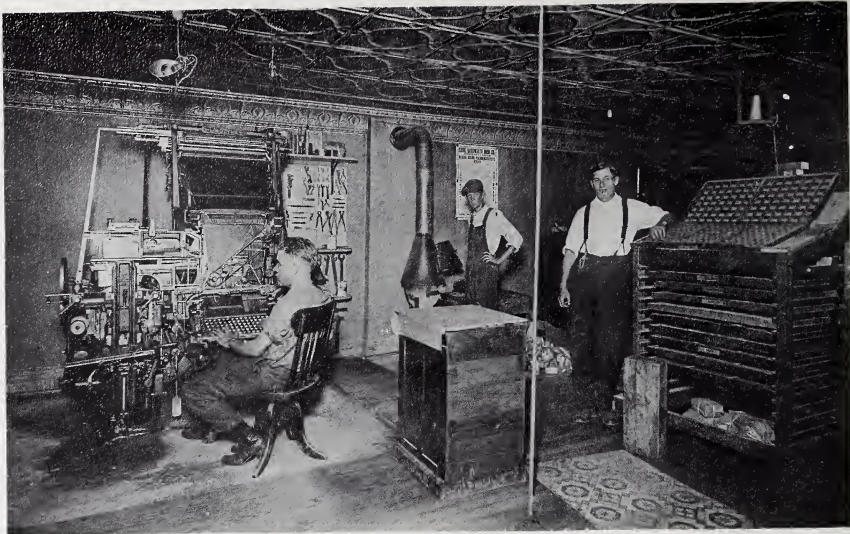
Here are the newspapers listed by the Kansas Historical Society to January 1, 1916, their periods of operation: Smith County Pioneer, fall of 1873 and still being published (the Pioneer was started at Cedarville in November 1872 and moved to Smith Center in the fall of 1873); Smith County Journal 1890-1925 (about); Bazoo Feb. 5, 1885-1899; Church Calendar 1895-1896 (a monthly); Democratic Messenger and Smith County Messenger, Sept. 6, 1900-1910; Independent (Smith Center and Harlan) Dec. 22, 1879-1880; Kansas Free Press, Oct. 3, 1879-1881; Light of Liberty (monthly and weekly), Smith Center and Lebanon, Sept. 1891-1895; Northwest Expositor (monthly) 1891-1892; Pioneer (daily) Nov. 1, 1887-1888; Smith County Bulletin March 7, 1884-1890; Smith County Record, Feb. 3, 1882-1884.

One other weekly newspaper not listed above because it came to Smith Center after 1916, was the Smith County Review which was moved from Athol where it was the Athol Review, June 13, 1933, by Harold P. Beason. It was merged with the Smith County Pioneer January 1, 1946.

Several people have contributed much to Smith Center newspapers. It is noteworthy that the Smith County Pioneer was founded by Dr. W. D. Jenkins at Cedarville. After several exchanges, W. D. Jenkins, Jr., a son of the founder, bought the Pioneer in October 1874 and he published it several years, perhaps until 1886. Then came W. H. Nelson who published it several years and as a daily in 1887-1888. And, although he was never the owner, the late A. L. Headley said Dr. Brewster Higley's name was once on the Pioneer's masthead.

A. L. "Bert" Headley played a prominent part in newspaper history. He learned the printer's trade on the Gaylord Herald owned and published by his father, Lew Headley. He came to Smith Center as a lad of 16 in 1893 to work for the Pioneer. After a short time he left and worked on other newspapers, including Ponca, Oklahoma where he worked on a daily newspaper owned by the Headley family. In 1910 Ben Baker of the Smith County Journal asked Bert to come to Smith Center and work for him. On the Journal he helped install the first linotype to come to Smith Center. In 1911 or 1912 he purchased a partnership in the Pioneer with W. H. Nelson and his son, Arthur Nelson, from Vete Hutchings. After a few years the Nelsons sold their interest back to Mr. Hutchings. Mr. Hutchings died in 1923 and Mr. Headley became the editor and publisher for himself and the Hutchings estate until January 1, 1946. This ended a career with the Pioneer of 34 or 35 years.

Mr. and Mrs. Ben T. Baker, owners and publishers of the Smith County Journal, also were prominent newspaper people and Mrs. Baker had a long career in that field. Mr. Baker bought the Journal in 1891 and published it until his death in July 1917. Mrs. Baker continued to publish the journal until 1923 when she sold it to Ross Busenbark and Matt Jones in August 1923. When Harold P. Beason brought his Review to Smith Center in 1933, Mrs. Baker became society editor and continued in that



SMITH COUNTY JOURNAL office in Smith Center
with Harry Reese at the linotype.

capacity until January 1, 1946. When the Review and Pioneer merged on that date, she joined the staff of the Smith County Pioneer and was employed there until September 1949 when she fractured a hip. She never returned to active newspaper work but she continued in related activities in that line until a few months before her death January 29, 1968, writing old time items, compiling historical work and often writing special items. Her active newspaper career covered over 40 years, plus another 17 to 18 years in the work just mentioned.

One of the real characters of Smith Center newspaper history was J. W. "Jack" Stewart who founded the Bazoo in 1884 and changed its name to Stewart's Bazoo in 1889. It was discontinued in 1899. Many stories are told about Mr. Stewart but this advertisement placed in the 1885 Smith County Fair Premium list indicates his thinking: "The Bazoo, Smith Centre, Kansas is a Democratic paper of the Jacksonian type. It has the reputation of being the most fearless of any paper ever published in the west and its publisher is the only one in the state who can boast of being CANED By A WOMAN. Rich, Racy and Full of Vinegar--You need it, you want it and you ought to have it."

The present ownership of the Pioneer, Harold P. Beason and W. E. Lee, along with the late Frazier L. Brown, bought the Headley interest in the Pioneer January 1, 1946, and the Smith County Review, owned by Mr. Beason, was merged with the Pioneer. After Mr. Brown's death in 1968, Mr. Beason and Mr. Lee bought all other interests in the Pioneer.

Mr. Beason has been a newspaperman since high school days. He worked on the WaKeeney and Scott City papers

two years before coming to Athol and buying his own paper in 1928. He has been a publisher in Smith county 43 years.

First Christmas Eve Church Program in 1876

The first Christmas program ever presented in a church in this city was the one on Christmas Eve in 1876. It was at the old stone Congregational Church and the majority of those taking part in the program were the children of the Sunday School. At that time 3 denominations were worshipping there together. They were members of the Methodists, Presbyterians and the Congregationalists, none of them having enough members here then to provide their own meeting place, so they had decided and agreed to join in having services together for a few years at least.

The church was the only one in the town at that time. The building had been started in 1873, but due to the scarcity of crops following the grasshopper plague in July, 1874, the work has been delayed until the fall of 1877. The interior of the church was not finished and the pews had not arrived on that Christmas Eve, nevertheless the gathering was a happy one for the early settlers. Church folks had been sitting on boards held up by wooden shipping boxes that had been saved for them by the merchants. That evening some of the members took kerosene lamps or lanterns to provide the light.

It was a wonderful time for the children, for there was a real tall tree, trimmed with tin-foil stars and strings of popcorn. There were no cranberries those early years. The little folks presented recitations, individually and by classes. Everyone sang and the gifts were given out by Santa Claus.

First Congregational Church

One of the first things the early settlers of this community did was to organize a church in order not to neglect the spiritual side of life in the strenuous tasks of the pioneer days. On April 27, 1873, the first church was officially recognized as an independent, local Congregational church.

Four years later the Methodist and Presbyterians agreed to do what they could to help finish the first structure for worship in this town. In return for whatever help the denominations could give, the trustees of the local religious center guaranteed the Methodists and Presbyterians the right to worship in the new building for at least five years after it was completed.

The churches of this young community, history records, started out in a spirit of cooperation – a spirit which exists today as different churches work together to strengthen the religious life of Smith Center.

C. G. Wheeler built the first Congregational church, at the corner of W. Court and S. Washington, in 1876. W. M. Wellman was the pastor.

The corner stone of the new Congregational church was laid September 18, 1904. The ceremonies were conducted by the pastor, Dwight H. Platt.

November 22, 1964, a new addition to the Congregational church was dedicated, conducted by the pastor, Richard T. Wentling.

The present pastor is O. T. Meador.

Methodist Church

The seeds of this early religious group were planted in 1873 by the Rev. J. C. Dana who organized a church class in Smith Center under the auspices of the Methodist church at Cedarville.

The First Methodist Church was organized September 8, 1877 and the first house of worship erected at E. Kansas and Grant, dedicated on December 14, 1884 during the pastorate of Dr. W. J. Meredith. This building was used until 1904 when it was razed to make way for the new church which was dedicated April 4, 1905. Rev. U.S. Brown was the pastor.

With the enthusiastic support of the pastor, Rev. W. H. Jenkin, the people of the church raised the money for the pipe organ, which was dedicated on September 1930, honoring motherhood.

Wesley Hall, an educational addition, was dedicated September 21, 1952, as part of the observance of the 75th anniversary of the church. The Rev. Ranold F. Platt was the pastor at this time.

Rev. George Wattenbarger is the present pastor of the United Methodist Church.

Howe Revival in Smith Center in 1907

W. E. Biederwolf held union meetings in Smith Center in November 1907. Homer Rhodeheaver, the famous singer was song leader. Five churches united in this revival campaign. Six hundred people confessed Christ. The meetings were held in a large tent located on West Kansas Avenue one block west of Main on the south side of the street. There was a large chorus each evening.

Christian Church

The First Christian Church in Smith Center was organized August 28, 1887, at a meeting held under the leadership of Elder F. P. Franklin, with 23 names on the charter.

The first meetings were held in homes, the opera house and the court house. When compelled to move from the court house, the congregation used Hendrick's hall on the second floor of what is now the Simmons Furniture building.

W. G. Germain was the first full time minister, coming in 1892.

A frame church was erected on the lots (not a home at 121 North Madison) and dedicated September 4, 1896.

The present church site, Kansas Avenue and Madison, was purchased in 1913 and the brick church was dedicated July 26, 1914. Rev. M. J. Hibbs was the minister.

Drexel G. Von Forell, pastor at present.

Presbyterian Church

The Presbyterian church was organized in 1872. The first old church was dedicated in 1877, H. F. Albright was the pastor.

A new church located at Kansas Avenue and Lincoln street was dedicated in 1912 with S. I. Ward as the pastor.

Ira. N. Fautrot came to the church in 1922 and was the pastor for 34 years.

The Presbyterians observed their 75th anniversary July 26, 27, 28, 1947.

Francis E. Spear is the present pastor.

First Baptist Church

The First Baptist Church of Smith Center was organized in 1881. The First Baptist Church held services in the Wilson hall, Smith Center from March 11, 1906 to January 17, 1907. The new church located at West Kansas Avenue and North Washington was dedicated October 27, 1907. Rev. N. E. Hollcroft, pastor.

Saint Mary's Catholic

The first Mass was held in Smith Center, January 25, 1959, in the VFW hall. The first Catholic church in Smith Center was blessed December 25, 1960 by Father James Grennan. The building is designed to serve as both church and parish hall. It is located on US-26 and Monroe street with Father Jerome Morgan as pastor.

Calvary Gospel Church

The Smith Center Calvary Gospel Church was organized March 18, 1945. They held services in the Old Tabernacle (the present John Deere building). The present church was dedicated February 23, 1949, located at W. New York and S. Washington. Norman Peterson, Sr. was the pastor, Rev. Dennis Kruger is the present pastor.

As of May 19, 1971, Will Fetrow is Smith Center's oldest citizen – age 103. The youngest citizen on May 19, 1971 is Shaila Melissa Reifsteeck, age 3 days.

Church of God

The first church was located on N. Washington in Smith Center. The church located on North Brandon and East 2nd was dedicated in 1949 with Rev. Chester A. Riley as pastor. The church was discontinued in 1967 and the church is now the home of the Boy Scouts of Smith Center.

Grace Baptist Church

The Grace Baptist Church located at East Third and Brandon Streets was organized February 8, 1953, and dedicated October 24, 1954.

Bruno Smith is the present pastor. The first pastor was Don Geary.

There were 22 charter members. The new addition to the church was dedicated in August of 1964.

American Lutheran Church

On January 15, 1947, the American Lutheran Church of Smith Center was organized with sixteen members signing the Constitution. Pastor A. R. Finkbeiner of the Gaylord Christ Lutheran Church conducted morning worship services.

The present location, 415 West New York, was purchased in September 1947. The first building, colonial style parish hall, was dedicated August 8, 1948. The church did not have a full-time pastor until 1957 when a Call was extended to Pastor Henry G. Stolz.

On August 26, 1962, a new Church and Educational Unit was dedicated.

On May 3, 1970, a remodeled building and Sanctuary was dedicated, Pastor David R. Larsen.

Church of the Nazarene

The Smith Center Church of the Nazarene was organized in 1933, as an outgrowth of an evangelistic effort, a camp-meeting planned and financed by a neighbor congregation, the Gaylord Church of the Nazarene, held in the early fall of 1933. The church was organized at the close of the meeting with approximately 16 charter members. Rev. Philo Conrad, of Gaylord, was the first pastor.

The congregation worshipped in a hall down town, presently Car Parts, Inc., for three years. In 1937, Rev. Harvey Hartman was called as pastor, and the congregation bought the Evangelical United Brethren Church and parsonage of the Corvallis community, and moved them to the present location, S. Madison and E. New York Streets.

Francis Runyon, present pastor.

J. B. Polka – Apple King of Center Township

J. B. Polka settled on a Center Township farm, 2 miles east and 2 miles north of Smith Center, in 1891. There was a rock house and other buildings built as dugouts in the creek bank when he bought the farm. In 1894 there were 9 acres of the farm planted to an apple orchard. In 1904 an additional 5 acres of apple trees were set out. When the orchard was small there was garden space between the rows which was used to grow potatoes, watermelons and garden produce for sale.

The orchard was planted on Spring Creek bottomland and soon Mr. Polka built a windmill for irrigation. Burl Ayres helped Mr. Polka build the windmill. It was made by using as a base a building 8 feet wide, 8 feet high and 16 feet long with a small tower on top. The wooden wheel was mounted on the north end and did not turn on a pivot so the only time it turned was when the wind was from the north or south. On windy days the mill would pump all the water out of the neighbors wells. The water was carried over the orchard by means of a tile system.

All of the work on the orchard was done by the family. The Polka children were Fred, Ernest, George, Marie (Patman), Ed, Rosa (Timma), Anna (Ellis), Emma (Huffine), and Lillian (Hale).

During the early years the orchard spraying was done with hand sprayers. The two olders Polka sons furnished the "Boy-Power" to operate the sprayers. Later a power sprayer was used.

Most of the apple crop was sold on the farm. The average yield was 2,000 to 3,000 bushels. The largest crop was in 1915 when the yield was 5,000 bushels. In 1918, when 3 of the Polka sons were in World War I, 10 to 12 men were hired to harvest the apple crop and a special day was set to work. All of the apples were picked in one day and the yield was 2,000 bushels. Some of the apples were made into cider. The cider mill was a large hydraulic mill that could take 14 bushels at a pressing.

During blossom time in the spring when the temperature would drop it was necessary to have orchard heaters. Mr. Polka tried commercial heaters, such as the ones used in orange groves, but he was not satisfied with them. He then built some to his own specifications – they were straight-sided half gallon bucket type without a chimney. He used crude oil in these and set it on fire by putting a corn cob on top for a wick. If he could not get crude oil he used kerosene. Crude oil burned for 5 hours and kerosene burned for 3 hours. It was a beautiful sight to see 1,200 of these set out at a 2 rod square interval. Most of the orchard was killed by drouth in the 1930's.

In 1910 Mr. Polka started raising Aberdeen Angus cattle. He named his farm "Applewood Angus Farm."

In 1911 he purchased his first tractor. It was a Rumley Oil Pull Tractor. It was a 25-45 horsepower machine and weighed a ton.

Mr. Polka lived on his farm until his death in 1928. Mrs. Polka remained on the farm until her death in 1949. Dale Chamberlain lives on the Polka farm now.

The elevation of Smith Centre is 1,806 feet above sea level with a variation of 50 feet within the city limits.

The first sidewalk in Smith Centre were board walks. The widest was from Main Street to the Courthouse – it was 8 feet wide and made of 2-inch planks laid an inch apart – it was on the south side of the street.

The time-of-day sirens started in March, 1904 and has sounded the time 4 times a day for 67 years.

The first automobile was seen in Smith Centre on July 29, 1902 – the car belonged to a salesman who made the trip to Smith Centre from Kirwin in 7 hours.



FRAME SCHOOLHOUSE in 1896 with students and faculty shown – some on top of the building.

The Smith Center Public Library

A group of women met in the spring of 1897 and organized the Women's Harmony Library Club for the purpose of starting a library. With the generous support of the local citizens this was accomplished. On May 14, 1897, the library was opened in the second floor office rooms of a building owned by H. H. Springer. A call was made for books to be donated and soon 300 books were placed on the shelves. Various organizations assisted in raising money for new books and other necessary expenses. By the combined efforts of all of the citizens, money was raised to make the down payment on a brick building located on Main Street. This was purchased from J. R. Burrow. The payments were to be \$50.00 a month. Dinners, ice cream socials, and other entertainments were given to raise the money to make the payments on the building. The members of the Library Club served as the librarians.

A few years later the Library Club traded the brick building on Main Street to L. M. Dundas for his home located in the center of four lots. The library was moved to this new location and plans were made to landscape the grounds. The library was open two afternoons a week, and the club members continued to act as librarians.

In 1902 the following rules were given for issuing books: 1. No person shall take more than one book at one time; 2. No person shall retain a book more than two weeks, except by notifying the Librarian of renewal; 3.

Any person retaining a book more than two weeks at any time without renewal, shall pay a fine of five cents per week for the time of such excess; 4. If any person shall lose or injure a book beyond reasonable wear, he or she shall pay to the Librarian such amount as the Librarian shall deem just – subject to the approval of the club.

The list of members in 1902 were these ladies: Emma Detwiler, Lillis Dugan, Dora Haberly, Isabel Lutz, Hattie Mollison, Edith Nelson, Minnie Slagle, Olivia Smith, Edna Smith, Ida Ahlborn, Thesta Barger, Mary Detwiler, Minnie Fleming, Adelaide Hobbs, Inez Mahin, Rose Nelson, Flora Reese, Ines Sargent, Alice Smith, and Abbie Wentworth.

In 1922 the city wanted the grounds for a Community Hall, so the Women's Harmony Library Club agreed to donate the land and building to the city if they would build the Community Hall so that it would house the library and if they would take over the operation of the library. The city agreed to do so, and the deed was dated February 1, 1922. Since that time the library has been city owned and tax supported by the city. It was also in the agreement that a full time librarian be hired, Miss Rose Hadden was the first full time librarian employed by the city. The building was completed late in the year 1922, and the library was located in the basement.

The library continued in this location until November, 1965, when a Federal grant of \$10,000 was obtained to

match a like amount in local funds. Remodeling plans were made to use the little used auditorium on the second floor of the community building. The remodeling was completed; a new heating system and air conditioning was installed. Open house was held in October, 1966, but the actual move was not completed until early 1967. The city now employs a full time librarian, and also an assistant librarian. The library is open daily except Sunday and open one evening each week.

Full credit is given to the members of the Women's Harmony Library Club for the establishing of the library in Smith Center. Since the city has taken over the library, the Library Club has disbanded, but one of the members, Mrs. Arch Rugger, continued her work with the library board for fifty years. The library is now operated as a free public library, open to any resident of the county at no charge. Today the library not only checks out books and periodicals, but also checks out recordings and paintings. Talking Books are serviced through the library. In 1967 a copying machine was installed. By the library's becoming a member of the Central Kansas Library System in 1965, many services can now be offered.

The following ladies have served as librarians or assistant librarians since the library was turned over to the city: Rose Hadden, Edna Marty, Birdie O'Neill, Dorothea Thompson, Sylvia Bolton, Gertie Ray, Martha Moorman Frey, Eula Gilpin, Doris Blaylock and the present librarian, Francis Gripton, and her assistant, Ilah Cates.

Smith Center Hospitals

THE STORY OF OUR FIRST HOSPITAL:

In 1893, J. R. Burrow built a large home at 319 North Main which had the distinction of being the first home in Smith Center to have steam heat. Mr. Burrow lived there until 1905 when he was elected Secretary of State and moved to Topeka. Henry Williams bought the house and lived there for several years and then sold it to Dr. C. C. Funk. Dr. Funk remodeled the house extensively to provide living quarters for his family and a small hospital on the second floor. This small hospital served Smith Center from 1921 until 1951. The doctors in Smith Center who used this hospital were Dr. F. M. Relihan, Dr. Victor Watts, Dr. H. Morrison, Dr. A. Jeffers and Dr. C. C. Funk. Dr. Outland of Kansas City and Dr. Bowen of Topeka performed much of the surgery during this period at the request of the attending physicians. In 1934 Miss Irene Rhodes (Mrs. Kenneth Blaylock) leased the hospital after Dr. Funk's death. When Mrs. Blaylock left Smith Center Miss Margaret O'Neill leased the hospital until 1951. The former hospital is now Ingleboro Rest Home operated by Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Burley.

SMITH COUNTY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL:

In April, 1946 the voters of Smith County voted in favor of the building of a new hospital for Smith County. The directors of this project were the Rev. A. Eggerling of Kensington, James Roush of Lebanon, Harry Lloyd of Gaylord and Glen Stoops, Fred Simmons and A. L. Headley of Smith Center. The land was donated by the J. R. Burrow interests and is located on south Main Street. The directors, after much planning with the doctors and businessmen of the county, let the contract for the building in 1950. The money was raised by the bond issue, a Federal Grant and donations from individuals and organizations. Several rooms were furnished by individual donations.

The name of the hospital was selected as a memorial to Smith County Veterans, who lost their lives in World War II. A memorial plaque, with their names on it, is on the north end of the building.

The hospital was dedicated on June 3, 1951. The doctors attending the dedication were Dr. H. Morrison, Dr. F. M. Relihan, Dr. Victor Watts, Dr. Lafe Bauer, Dr. Robert Sheppard, Dr. D. A. Hardman and Dr. I. E. Nickell. Soon after the dedication, Dr. Hugh Woods located here. Dr.'s Sheppard, Hardman and Woods have a modern clinic at the corner of East Court and South Madison.

The hospital, in addition to the medical staff, has an X-Ray technician, parttime pathologist and other trained laboratory workers.

The hospital board secured as operators of the hospital the Great Plains Lutheran Hospital Association.

Construction on a new addition to the Smith County Memorial Hospital, with remodeling of the older section, started in 1970. The older section will be completely renovated with the following changes; the kitchen and dining room will be between the old building and the new building, the old kitchen and dining room will be remodeled to serve as offices and laboratories, the admitting office will remain where it is now and the hospital lobby will be extended to the west. The older section has a 26-bed capacity. The new addition will be a 28-bed long-term care center with 2-bed units. The new addition will also have a separate lobby. It is expected to be completed in October of 1971.

PUBLIC SALE!

I will sell at public sale one-half mile south and one mile east of Smith Centre, on

THURSDAY, FEB. 28,

BEGINNING AT 10:00 A. M. THE FOLLOWING PROPERTY:

Bay horse, weight 1300,
Black mare, weight 1400,
7 head of good cows four fresh and
others to be fresh soon.
4 one year old steers, 4 calves,
2 one year old heifers,
10 head shoats,
1 good wagon, 1 old wagon.
Road wagon, 2 set double harness,
Set single harness,
Set leather flynets, Badger riding
cultivator, walking cultivator.

Stirring plow, Buckeye mower,
2 walking listers, 2 harrows
2 long knife weed cutters,
Hand corn sheller, grind stone,
Work bench and vice, 50 bu. oats,
3 dozen chickens,
Good cook stove, heating stove,
Cupboard, bed stands, tables,
All household goods and kitchen
furniture and many other things
too numerous to mention.
EVERYTHING GOES.

TERMS OF SALE.

All sums of \$5 and under cash in hand. All sums over \$5 ten months time will be given with approved security, with interest at 10 per cent per annum.

E. H. RATLIFF.

AL HESTER, Auctioneer

Dentists From Then and Now

There is little information on record of the early day dentists of Smith Center. This article was written with the capable cooperation of Dr. Bill Grimes, who recalled through stories as completely as he could, the dentists who were in practice here during the centennial era.

Dr. Grimes told this writer of three famous citizens of our country who practiced the dental trade. One was Paul Revere, who did dentistry, as a sideline to his career as a silver-smith. Zane Gray was a famous writer, who earned enough from his dental practice, to finance the writing of his first novel. An infamous dentist of the early days was Doc Holliday, who resided at Dodge City, Kansas in its heyday and who later moved to Tombstone, Arizona.

Emmet Womer used to tell that his father, Sylvester Womer who homesteaded in Pawnee Township, was the county's first "tooth-puller". Mr. Womer was in the Union Army during the Civil War and learned the "tooth-pulling" trade because, as Emmet told, "the Army Doctors didn't want to bother with pulling teeth." Mr. Womer brought his tools of the trade with him when he emigrated to Kansas.

Mr. Womer's experience in being a "tooth-puller" in Smith County was followed by a group of itinerant dentists, who traveled a circuit, mostly by train. These traveling "tooth-pullers" sent out, ahead of their visits, handbills similar to circus and carnival handbills, telling of the towns and the dates that they would give the citizens dental care. The ads would usually say that "Dr. So-and So would be in Smith Center on a certain day and would make appointments with those people who needed dental care." The dental care was often held outdoors, much to the entertainment of the citizens of the towns.

Dr. Shively came to Smith Center with Dr. Joe Lutz, in 1896, and opened a dental office. Dr. Shively was a "Dapper Dan" who wore a goatee beard, a long-tailed coat and a stovepipe hat. When he wasn't busy in his office, he would hire a buggy or a surrey and a banjo player and ride the streets of town advertising "painless tooth extraction". If, upon examination the tooth was loose, it was pulled painlessly but, if the tooth was more firmly embedded he would tell the patient that he could save the tooth. Dr. Shively was quite a character around Smith Center. He and Dr. Lutz had offices together for several years.

An early day visit to a rural doctor resulted in a surprise for Dr. Frank Relihan. When Dr. Frank came back to Smith Center to practice medicine he decided to call on Dr. J. A. McCammon, at Reamsville, to get acquainted. When Dr. Frank arrived there Dr. McCammon was sitting on the ground, leaning against a tree, chewing tobacco. Dr. Frank had visited with him awhile when a man rode up on horseback and asked Dr. McCammon to pull his aching tooth. Dr. McCammon got up and went over to a pile of cornshucks lying there and started digging around in them. He told Dr. Frank that he had pulled a tooth that morning and had tossed the forceps into the corn shucks. Finally, the forceps were found, wiped off with a rag, and the aching tooth was pulled. The man rode off on his horse apparently satisfied with his dental care. Dr. Frank's surprise was the evident unconcern of both Dr. McCammon and the patient over the pulling of the tooth in such unsanitary conditions.

Another story of the lack of sterilization of instruments concerns a local dentist, who sterilized his forceps over a Bunsen burner, and then would pull a used handkerchief out of his pocket and wipe the soot off the forceps and then proceed with his work. Not many in Smith Center ever seemed to suffer too many ill effects from this method.

The Smith Center dentist, who were trained and practiced through the years, were as nearly as can be determined the following: Dr. Campbell, Dr. Shively, Dr. Joe Lutz, Dr. Halbert, Dr. John Buckner, Dr. Harry Tweedy, Dr. Sparks, Dr. Virgil Grinstead, Dr. R. C. Windscheffel, Dr. Paul Dutton, Dr. Bill Grimes, Dr. S. C. Drevitts (new in 1970).

Smith County Medical Society

(Compiled and Written by Victor E. Watts, M.D.)

A compiled list of the Physicians and Surgeons who have practiced medicine and surgery in Smith County, Kansas since the organization of the county. The medical group in Smith County has always cooperated to the fullest extent so all of the group has been included in this report. The Smith County Medical Society was organized and a State charter was granted in 1905. D. W. Relihan, M.D., was very instrumental in the organization and the original charter is now in the keeping of his son Francis H. Relihan, M.D. Listed by cities, we submit the following:

SMITH CENTER:

B. W. Slagle M.D.
D. W. Relihan M.D.
Hector Morrison M.D.
Albertus Jeffers M.D.
Victor E. Watts M.D.
Corwin C. Funk M.D.
Milo Robertson M.D.
L. W. Stephenson M.D.
John R. Montgomery M.D.
G. W. Cannon M.D. (Crystal Plains)
Sarah Selbe M.D.
Lafe W. Bauer M.D.
Dennis A. Hardman M.D.
Robert Sheppard M.D.
Hugh J. Woods M.D.
Perry Rashleigh M.D.
William W. Steen M.D.
I. E. Nickell D.O.

GAYLORD:

F. M. Leary M.D.
Holmes M.D.
Walter Tallman M.D.

ATHOL:

W. W. Scott M.D.
Henry H. Hearle M.D.
W. W. Love M.D.

CEDAR:

W. H. Bostwick M.D.

REAMSVILLE:

J. A. McCammon
O. C. Reed M.D. (later Kensington)
Hardesty M.D. (later Jennings)
Fairchild M.D.

LEBANON:

W. W. Mays M.D.
John B. Dykes M.D.
Henry A. Dykes M.D.
B. P. Hatch M.D.
James M. Scott M.D.
Roscoe Mays M.D.
Bower M.D.
Francis C. Obert M.D.
E. W. Eustace D.O.

KENSINGTON:

J. W. Johnson M.D.
L. A. Golden M.D.
R. Schoonhoven M.D.
F. M. Bilby M.D.
R. R. Osborn M.D.
W. H. Pearson M.D.
O. C. Reed M.D.
Buford Hartman M.D.

HARLAN:

J. W. S. Cross M.D.
W. H. Bostwick M.D.

BELLAIRE:

J. W. Yankey M.D.
J. L. Cooley M.D.
Lanning M.D.

CORA:

William Bell M.D.
Charles Nelson M.D.

Brewster Higley lived on Beaver Creek in N.W. part of the county, later going to Beaverford.



SMITH CENTER CITY BAND in 1900. Back row - Jamie McDowell, Frank Springer, Harry Reilhan, Art Reilhan, Art Nelson, Frank Reilhan, Ben T. Baker, Ed Wentworth, Bob Dundas, Ray Moore, Clyde Moore. Next to back row - E. Dahlgren, Lou Lyon, Bill Simpson, Walter Stevens,

Melvin Rinelhart, Vern Hendricks, Fred Uhl. Third row from back - Art Hutchinson, Vete Hutchings, Archie Coolidge, Wardie Stone, George Hendricks (leader), Bill Mahin, George Pickler, Ralph Hutcherson, Gene Hutcherson, Snare drummers - Louie Stevens, George Round,

Smith Center Had "Pest" House in 1899

Smith Center had a smallpox scare in 1899, when four of our townsmen became afflicted. They all survived. They were Tod Reed, George Eply, Frank Burrow and Ed Spratlin. It was understood that the men contracted the disease from a strange man in the barber shop of Ed Spratlin. Mr. and Mrs. Cal Owens had both had the disease earlier so Mr. Owens nursed at the Tod Reed home and Mrs. Owens nursed at the Frank Burrow home. Several young men were thought to be exposed so they were confined to a house in the northwest part of town - the house took the name "The Pest House". In that day the prescribed treatment for smallpox was 4 teaspoons of vinegar in a glass of water daily. The stores in Smith Center were soon sold out of vinegar and had it shipped to them in barrels and kegs, the demand was so great.

Buffalo Stampede

Mrs. Helen Zimmerman, who came to Smith Center with her parents the J.M. Stevens in the fall of 1872, used to tell of an incident which happened on an early day celebration. In the early afternoon, when all at the picnic were enjoying the special occasion, they suddenly heard a loud noise and could see by the dust that a buffalo herd was approaching from the north. The men grabbed weapons and mounted horses to ride to the scene to endeavor to turn the stampede away from the city. One buffalo fell into a cellar that was being dug on North Main Street and was shot. The man with the gun also shot at other buffalo. Other men waved and yelled and swerved the animals to the west. The celebration was in Springers Grove then at the south edge of town just across from the present Rock Island depot.

Just One Sod House In Smith Center

The newer generation probably thinks that Smith Center, in its early days, was dotted by numerous sod houses in which the early settlers made their homes. But such is not the case. Our town had one sod house. It was built in 1872 or 1873 by Col. L.P. Sherman who used it as a storage place for thousands of hedge trees that he sold over the country to homesteaders. In later years he quit the business and Rube Jarvis, son of Judge Jule Jarvis, used it to house his "rain-making equipment and chemicals". The sod house stood for 30 years on the site now occupied by Bonecutter-Hill Chevrolet Co.

Sunflower Stalks As Building Material

In the 1902 Pioneer there is a story of the Sherman House which had been built in 1873. While tearing out a partition at the Sherman House a lot of sunflower stalks were taken out. They had been used as lath when the hotel was built 29 years before when lumber was scarce and money was even scarcer. So the sunflower stalks, with which the country was covered, were used and they answered the purpose very well. The people gathered up the "lath" and kept them as relics. The Sherman House was torn down in 1943, after 70 years, and the Relihan Law Office was built on the location.

The first street paving in Smith Centre was done on several blocks of Main Street in 1923.

L. C. Uhl, Jr. and S. C. Stevens had large commercial apple and cherry orchards east of the standpipe in the early 1920's.



EARLY DAY PHOTO, west side of Main street, looking north from New York street. Note street sprinkler, old model car, teams and buggy wagon.

The Legal Profession

Of the various classes of people who came here to make Smith Center what it is to-day, we are undertaking here to write about the lawyers and judges who made their contribution over the one hundred years that have passed. In so far as court records have any bearing on the subject,

it appears that it was in 1873 when Smith Center first came into the lime-light as a county seat town. It was then that the names of resident attorneys appeared, and among them were the names of L.C. Uhl, Sr., G.W. White, E.M. Burr, A.M. Corn, R.M. Pickler, John Q. Royce, F.J. Pattee, W. R. Myers, all of whom resided in Smith Center, and for the most part most of them spent their entire lives here making a substantial contribution to the growth of the town. It is interesting to note that there were more attorneys in Smith Center in 1873 than there is at the present time.

R.M. Pickler served as judge of the Fifteenth Judicial district for a quarter of a century. He was an outstanding judge with a statewide reputation and a man with remarkable judicial qualifications. Judge Pickler was a great credit to his profession and of the time to which he belonged. He was the only Smith county attorney ever to serve as Judge of the Fifteenth Judicial district.

Of the five lawyers now engaged in the practice in Smith Center, all but one were born, raised and educated in Smith County. There are many who started in the law practice in Smith County who have gone to other locations and met with fine success. At this point it might be well to mention a few of them. Franklin Hahn, of Phillipsburg, Donald Moyers, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, Judge William B. Ryan, our present District Judge, J.F. Bennett, late of Norton, Kansas, Ralph Hutchinson, who was admitted here and located in South Dakota, Ray Bottomly, who was born and raised at Cedar and moved to Montana where he served as Attorney General of the state with considerable distinction, at least enough that we are proud to claim him as our own.

There was a tendency in the early days of Smith County for certain families to follow the professional career of their father, uncle or other relative. In this respect the Mahlin Family holds the championship for furnishing the most lawyers within its family circle. The original stock was I.M. Mahlin and F.W. Mahlin, who were brothers and originally lived at Cedarville. William E. Mahlin, son of I.M. Mahlin, was raised in Smith Center for the greater part of his younger days, he studied law and entered the practice and had good success. Donald Moyer, married the daughter of William Mahlin, and, as stated heretofore, is practicing law in Tulsa. Hilary Mahlin, son of F.W. Mahlin, entered the law business and was an extremely competent attorney at Bartlesville, Oklahoma, but his promising career was shortened by a heart attack. Then there was Mason Mahlin, son of F.W. Mahlin, who is engaged in the law practice and now located in Washington, D.C. In addition to these family members of the profession, there is Salina Mahlin Teeple, sister of F.W. and I.M. Mahlin, whose son, George Teeple was a very fine and successful lawyer at Mankato, Kansas, until his death a few years ago. Another attorney in the Mahlin family was Roy Adcock, who married the daughter of Hilary Mahlin. Roy is now located in California and in the law profession.

Another family that made a fine contribution to the history and advancement of the county was E. S. Rice, who was the first in this county to take the law course at Kansas University Law School. His nephew, W.S. Rice,

associated in the practice with his uncle, E.S. Rice, and both were very able and fine attorneys and a credit to the profession.

From the early beginning of this part of Kansas and Smith County we find at frequent intervals the name of Weltmer and quite naturally their names will appear among the lawyers who have been a part of our history and tradition, and we cannot resist including the Weltmers as among our numbers and to say the least we have a second mortgage on them. The firm of Weltmer, Weltmer & Weltmer of Mankato, Kansas, is one of the outstanding firms in our part of the State, the firm being headed by Loren E. Weltmer, father of Roderick and Marmaduke, all highly educated, industrious and competent lawyers and who spring from the root planted in Smith County soil where Loren E. Weltmer was born and raised and we hope he will always have a place and be counted as one of us.

We come to the limit of the space allowed for us for the chapter on Lawyers of Smith County and it may be that we have inadvertently over-looked some that should have been included. One of the old successful and highly regarded lawyers of just a few years back was L.C. Uhl, Jr., known to most of us as Lennie. He was a good lawyer and a good Democrat. Lennie had many of the same qualities of Harry Truman, and in many ways has reminded us of the great Harry who was loyal and full of fight.

We acknowledge with thanks the help we have received from Florence Vincent, the Clerk of our District Court and extend our appreciation therefore. She very willingly gave much time in helping us with the necessary research required.

Among the early lawyers in Smith Center was Tod Reed who began his practice at 19 years, in 1888, He was probably the first of those early lawyers who had been to college - he attended Gould college at Harlan. He served as county attorney for six years and became State Senator from this district. In 1911 he went to California but after ten years there returned to Smith Center and again practices law in this county.

Miles Elson studied law books while he was serving as county superintendent of schools, passed the bar and became another Smith Center lawyer. He served as county attorney during his practice and closed out his career as probate judge where he served several terms.

Frank Bell got his legal education the hard way, working to pay his way through law school. After passing the bar he returned to Smith Center to practice. He served several terms as county attorney during his career.

Wilford R. Lutz practiced law in Smith Center some 35 years and during that time served as county attorney. He developed an income tax service to which he devoted most of his time for the latter part of his career.

(Much of the above information was furnished and prepared by A.W. Relihan. However other contributors feel that three lines he alloted to the Relihans was too brief, hence this additional comment.)

As a family there has been a Relihan law office in Smith Center for over 80 years, D.M. Relihan, father of A.W. and T.D. Relihan, opened a law office in 1891 and an uncle, A.S. Kingsbury, was also an attorney here for years.

Art, senior member of the firm of Relihan, Relihan & Relihan, graduated from Kansas University law school on May 30, 1906, the same day of his father's funeral. Because of his father's death, he didn't take the bar in 1906 but was issued a permit to practice by the district judge, taking the bar in 1907. But he began his legal career in June 1906, 65 years ago this centennial year. He served as county attorney and was state representative back in the 1930's.

Ted, Art's brother, completed his legal education at KU in 1912 and immediately joined his brother in practice. They became one of the best known law firms in Kansas and are still practicing together.

Terry, Ted's son, also a graduate of the University of Kansas law school, joined his father and uncle in legal practice in 1950 to add a third Relihan name to the firm.

Arno Windscheffel, a Smith county native of the Gaylord vicinity began his practice of law in Smith Center in 1935 after graduating from the University of Washburn law school. He served as county attorney and was state representative. He was also a member of the State Board of Water Resources for seven years and chairman three years. He was presented a plaque by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior for outstanding work in the field of soil and water conservation.

Wayne Grindol was county attorney from January 1963 to February 1966 when he resigned to go into the banking business in Jewell.

James Feters, present county attorney, is aggressive and the making of a very good lawyer. Jim has been with us only a few years but he is making fine progress and is certain of success.

Celebration July 4, 1876

The Centennial 4th of July in Smith County in 1876 was attended by a crowd of 2,000 persons. The celebration was held at Phillips Grove, 2 1/2 miles northeast of Smith Center, where many beautiful trees grew at that time. At least 1,200 people gathered early in the morning in Smith Center to form a parade to the grove. A. J. Watson was appointed as marshal of the day. The procession was a mile and a half long and was headed by the Pawnee Guards under the command of W. H. Nelson and marshal band of Hank Myers on fife, Wash Johnson on snare drum and James Cameron on bass drum. The morning program was made up of music by the drum corp and patriotic singing, a reading of the Declaration of Independence and an oration by the Hon. M. B. Sherwin. All enjoyed picnic dinners after which the crowd was called to order to hear the history of Smith County.

Perhaps the most interesting and attractive feature was the representation of the 13 colonies by 13 of the prettiest girls of the county. They were attired in the costumes of the times and rode during the parade in an elaborately decorated hayrack, pulled by two prancing horses. The young ladies were Eva Stevens, Cora Burr, Ida Cordry, Kitty Baker, Mary Bonnett, Hattie Bonnett, Fanny Walker, Henriette Travis, Nina Newkirk, Nora Dedrick, Hattie Garlow, Katie Chandler and Emma Chandler. Jessie Edson represented the Goddess of Liberty. Other States were represented by little girls each dressed in white with a pink sash on which was lettered the name of the State. To A. B. Cordry, Superintendent of Smith Center Sunday Schools, belonged the credit of arranging the pageant.

The Wentworth-Wilson Furniture Store had the first Acetylene gas lights in their store in Smith Center.

Smith Center's First Flag

Smith Center's first flag was made in 1876 and completed in June of that year by the women of the town. The flag was patterned and sewed together in a home-made tent. The women took their sewing machines to the tent and worked together in making the flag, being assisted by Capt. J. S. McDowell, who cut the stripes and made the pattern for the 44 stars. The edges were whipped over and all of the stars were sewed to the field by hand. The flag measured 6 feet by 12 feet. It took 2 weeks to make the flag which was first used at a 4th of July picnic in Phillips Grove in 1876.

Smith Centre Businesses in 1915

Mr. and Mrs. Otto Haberly found a copy of the November 11, 1915 issue of the Smith County Journal which was referred to as the "Industrial Review". Smith Centre was an aggressively progressive city of about 1,600 population. This issue of the paper was devoted to Smith Centre enterprises and told of the "goodness of life" in our town.

The C. S. Buchanan store advertised women's shoes costing from \$2.50 to \$3.50. The Coolidge Clothing Store had an ad for Hart Shaffner and Marx men's coats for \$25.00. There was a long article telling of S. C. Stevens' various enterprises and his great success with the Stevens orchards east of the standpipe. He had 5 acres of fruit trees at this location.

Some other stores mentioned are: Cooley's Variety Store; W. M. Brown, Furniture; Ed Rugger, The "New Cafe"; Walker & Son, Produce; Ed Stevens, Grocers, who Urges The Townfolk To Eat Flapjacks Made With Buckwheat Flour At 6¢ a Pound; Barger's Men's Store; Bert Boeve, Grover was having a coffee sale at 25¢ to 30¢ a pound; Wilson and Hughes, Furniture, Hosier Kitchen Cabinets for \$29.00; Smith Centre Lumber Company urging people to buy their coal now; Studebaker Cars for \$885, C. F. Jackson; Weiss Department Store; Sargent & Rhodes, Maxwell Cars for \$695; Warble, Dimond & Son, Drug Store, Paint Sale; Overland Cars for \$1,095, Wm. Bell; E. E. Matson & Company, "The Leader in Low Prices"; C. H. Rugger, Jeweler; M. E. Hays, Blacksmith and Wagon Maker; Bland House Hotel on Kansas Avenue (Mr. Bland also tuned and sold pianos); W. E. Luse, Hardware & Implements; Palace Barber Shop, B. F. Lowery assisted by Lester Sage one of the first barbers in Smith Centre; J. S. Myers, Groceries and Queensware; Erle E. Buchanan, Suitorator; W. C. Roberts, Cleaner & Dyer; and Dimond & Faulkner, Buick Cars for \$985.

In 1915 this area had 1,000 cars and the Hickman Steam Vulcanizing Works was formed. Other businesses were: E. P. Smith, Harness & Saddlery; J. D. Boyle, Abstractor; R. E. Henderson and Son, Hardware Store; J. O. Smith, Ford & Saxon Cars; Palace Cafe, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Maxwell; Mathes & Mathes, Real Estate & Loans; Horton & Taylor, Veterinarians; and Connor & Agnew, Veterinarians. All of the pictures in this edition were taken by the Stevens Brothers Studio, E. B. Stevens managed the Smith Centre shop.

In 1915 Smith Centre had 2 banks, 2 schools, 2 telephone systems, 3 elevators, 5 blacksmith shops, 1 cigar factory, 2 cement block factories, 1 marble and granite works, 2 livery stables, 2 book stores, 4 law firms, 6 physicians and 2 dentists. It also had 1 electric light company with 24 hour service.



THE HENRY AHLBORN HOME across the street east of the Presbyterian church. Built in 1904, West Kansas Ave. to the left.

Some Stores of the Middle Years

Barger's Men's Clothing	Geo. Hammond, car dealer
E. B. Stevens, Drugs	Peterson Motor Co.
P. E. Curtis, Drugs	Blaylock Tire Store
Morrison-Steele, Drugs	Wilson & Hughes, Furniture
Cecil Rugger, Jewelry	Lowery Furniture
Fred Pease, Jewelry	Simmons-Rice, Furniture
C. R. Peyton, Jewelry	Simmons-Olliff, Furniture
Ellis Jewelry Store	Agnes Morris, Millinery
Henderson & Luse, Hardware	J. C. Penney
J. D. Flaxbeard, Hardware	Clint Howe, Grocer
Julius Tillman, Hardware	Walter Hammond, ready to wear
Ahlborn & Stone, Hardware	Burr's Grovery
Jack Jackman, Barber	Safeway
Jude Korenke, Barber	Ehly Bakery
Luse Implement Co.	Mason's Bakery
Baldwin Monuments	Clark's Studio
Eply Coal Co.	McCammon Studio
James & Lyall, Barbers	Wolf Cleaners
Edell Creamery	Strieby Plumbing
Hannan Hatchery	Arnold Plumbing
Kirkendall Shoe Repair	Blair Theatre
Dudley Shoe Repair	Western Auto
Hays Blacksmith	Firestone
Walker Produce Co.	Stephenson Men's Shop
R. L. Brown, Auctioneer	Eleda Dress Shop
Mackey Real Estate	Elsie's Shop
Mahin & Mehlin, Car Dealers	The Style Shop
Tom Robertson, Car Dealer	Bolton Gas & Electric
G. E. Wineinger, Car Dealer	Kansas Power Co.

The first tandem cycle in the city came in 1896.

Do you remember the street sprinklers that settled the dust before the streets were paved?

Smith County Veterinary Service

Dr. Hiram "Hi" Faubion, D.V.M., opened the Smith County Veterinary Service in Smith Center in 1958. All business was conducted from the garage and basement of a rented residence until 1960. This was the year the Veterinary Hospital was completed and opened. In 1964 Dr. Kenneth Rundle, D.V.M., was added to the staff and the business and services expanded. In 1968 Dr. Sam McDowell, D.V.M., was added and the staff now includes three Veterinarians and a full time kennel man. The facilities are still expanding and everyone at the Smith County Veterinary Service hopes the services are increasing for Smith County.

Alkar Tire Service

In November 1965, Al Zorn and Gene Karsting came to Smith Center and started a Tire Retread Business in the VFW Building. In 1970 they moved their business to a new building on U.S. 36, put in more equipment, added tire sizes and today their truck covers a wide area with local products. They have two employees and are planning for another.

Arlwin Manufacturing

Arlie and Wendell Peterson, father-son team who formerly operated Pete's Restaurant, started a fiber glass manufacturing plant in the former restaurant on Highway 36, in April 1970. They began on holding tanks and shower stalls for campers and trailers. Today they have several other products, toppers for pickups, milo boxes for drills, fertilizer boxes, front sections for some trailers and an accessory item for motorcycles. They have one employee besides themselves at present but they're talking assembly line production in the near future.



SMITH CENTER COUNTRY CLUB with players on fifth green. Photo was taken during a tournament.

Organizations

Organizations have played an important part in the history of Smith Center, since the settling of the town until the present time. It is impossible to name all of the organizations or to tell of the numerous projects. Humorous incidents are recorded concerning several clubs. The Dec. 19, 1889 issue of the paper called for an important meeting of the Woman's Temperance Union. In the Jan. 23, 1890 issue it stated that a local library was needed so the young people could have a place to loaf and read and it would keep them off of the streets and out of the local beer parlors. It was also in 1890 that the Smith County Teachers Association was organized here in Smith Center with all of the local teachers joining. The following clubs were organized through the years:

Eastern Star - 6-23-1893 Pres. Mrs. D. W. Relihan
 Rebekah Lodge - 10-15-84
 Fortnightly - late 90's
 Domestic Science - 2-3-1903
 P.E.O. - 4-1911 now celebrating their 60th year
 D.A.R. - 4-18-31 Regent: Mrs. Nettie Douglas
 Social Twenty - 6-1902
 American Legion Auxiliary - 7-20-1920
 V.F.W. Auxiliary
 B.P.W. Club - 1924
 K. Club
 Zend-Avesta - 1934 Florence Moorman
 Round Table - 1935 Alois Ryan
 Entre Nous - 1951
 Picnic Club - 1906
 Extension Units - three in S.C.
 Civic League - 1911
 Art Club - 1954 Helen Nickell
 Tops Club - 1970
 Garden Clubs - three in Smith Center
 Girl Scouts
 Hospital Guild - organized, met several years, disbanded
 Men's Organizations:
 Chamber of Commerce (first called Business Mens Club) organized in Feb. 1889 with Henry Ahlborn, President and Lair Dean Secretary.
 Masonic Lodge - organized 1875 - Western Star
 AF and AM
 I.O.O.F. Lodge - organized 1878 - Vesta Lodge 153
 American Legion - organized 1919 - U.S. Center Post 220
 Veterans of Foreign Wars - organized 1913 - Kingsbury-Chase Post 1141

Rotary International - Organized 1936 - Home on the Range chapter
 Lions International - Organized 1946 - District 17NW
 Junior Chamber of Commerce - Organized 1964 - Chapter 105
 Smith Center Golf Club - Began in 1916 - present location - 1918
 Boy Scouts - Organized 1946
 Marine Corps League - Mt. Suribachi Detachment - organized Feb. 9, 1955

Do you remember following the ice wagon in hopes that you could get a small piece of ice?

Swimming Pool

The Smith Center Swimming Pool, the first in the county, was opened May 28, 1956. A. W. Relihan, native son and lifelong booster, gave the address at the formal opening for the improvement. The pool runs from three feet deep at the shallow end to ten to twelve feet, and also there is a shallow pool for the kiddies.

Smith Center Airport

The Smith Center Airport is located one mile south-west of town. A favorable bond issue was passed in 1944 to construct the airport. The first hangar was constructed in 1947. Later in 1961 four more hangars were added with four more following. At the present time there is space for eleven planes. There are nine planes on the field at the present time. There are at present 45 pilots residing in the area with six of these being women. The present airport has three excellent sod strips with the north-south strip, half mile in length, equipped with runway lights.

Shades of the Dalton Gang! The Smith Center Airport has had a robbery in 1971. A strange plane flew into the airport the morning of April 30, 1971, the pilot had his plane filled with gas and then held-up Marion Morgan and robbed him of \$100. Marion Morgan and Star Barron, partners in an Aerial Spraying Business, were at the airport spraying the runways for weeds when the robbery occurred. The suspected robber was caught a week later in Arkansas; he hanged himself in a jail cell in Arkansas on May 12, 1971.



WOMEN PILOTS painting directional guides on top of local hangar several years ago.



NATIONAL GUARD was organized in 1954 and the Armory was erected in 1960.

National Guard Armory

The National Guard Unit was organized in Smith Center in May, 1954 and was activated in July of 1954. The first Commanding officer was Capt. Max Kern. Other officers were Liet, Jack Ayres, Don Porter, Jack Tillman, First Sergeant LaVon Ayres. The first armory was housed in the present Pounds Motor Co. Building on North Main. The present Armory located at the edge of the fair grounds was constructed in 1960.

Commanders of the local unit started with Max Kern followed by Byron F. Miller, Richard A. Nelson, Ralph K. Collier, Denis L. Sweat, Darrel D. Gale, Hubert R. Teachen and now CWO Tuxhorn.

The National Guard Armory is one of the best looking and best kept in the state. This is due to Commander Tuxhorn and the Guardsmen. The Armory provides a place for recreation and physical exercise for many young men and children of the community.

The Armory is supported by rentals and donations with labor to keep the Armory open and cleaned up donated by the Guardsmen.

The unit now carries an authorized strength of 68 enlisted men and is kept at full strength at all times.

Peterson Industries

Leonard Peterson sold a successful implement business and later closed out a furniture store located at the North east edge of Smith Center on Highway 36. In the furniture store building. Leonard and his son Vaughn started a Excel Camper Mfg. Plant. This has grown rapidly and the buildings have been increased in size to accommodate the manufacture of campers and travel trailers from economy right up through luxury models. At the present time 70 people are employed and they delivered 125 units from the local plant the first week of April.

Besides building and assembling the camper and trailer bodies they also make mattresses and cushions. The curtains and draperies are also made and installed at this factory.



MINI-MAX OFFICE SECTION of local warehouse which covers a half block and services stores in over fourth of Kansas and some in Nebraska.

Mini-Max

Under the direction of Dick Boogaart, Milton Sorem with Dick Simpson as President, Mini-Max Wholesale Food firm was started in Smith Center in November 1951. This firm handled fresh fruit and vegetables and frozen food for Boogaart Stores thru out North Central Kansas. This business is housed in the former Seymour Packing Plant located just north of the railway tracks on North Main. Then came milk distribution. The plant was increased in size and the former garage building was bought and this too remodeled. Along the way somewhere the two buildings were connected and the business expanded by adding a bakery and an ice cream plant. Also for several years an egg plant was operated but this operation was discontinued.

In recent years the Boogaart firm merged with Scrivner of Oklahoma to form the Scrivner-Boogaart firm and the firm is still expanding, locating new stores and increasing local volume. At the present time Mini Max employs 75 people. 14 semi-trucks service 76 stores in North Central Kansas.

The Conger Football Era

Smith Center high school played its first football game in 1899 with visiting Phillipsburg. Smith Center won 17-5. A note in Football Review (1962) says this was the first football game ever played in Smith Center. Players were: Melvin Rinehart, Riland Criss, Charles Ashbaugh, Frank Relihan, Clyde Moore, W. Dammenger, Harry Relihan, Dunreath Bryam, Fred Uhl, Rae Moore, Otis Burgess and Art Relihan.

Although there have been many fine athletic teams in Smith Center, the football teams during the Conger era, 1927-1937, when Ralph Conger was coach, deserves special mention. During those years his teams won 73 games, lost 10 and tied 7. They scored 1543 points to their opponents' 228. They were undefeated and unscored on in 1936, scoring 220 points to none for their opponents.

Wagner Park

Smith Center has a beautiful little park at the north end of Madison Street. For years the acreage had been just a weed patch and in 1940 Sam Wagner, a landscape gardener, was employed by the city to take charge and develop a park. There are beautiful trees, flowers and vines plus picnic tables, a large fire place and grills. There is a tennis court, croquet grounds, swings, a merry-go-round and a swinging bridge. In 1938 the Old Dutch Mill from Reamsville, owned by the Schwarz family, was given to Smith Center largely through the efforts of Elmer Pounds.

Members of the City Council and the Rotary Club gave a surprise dinner for Mr. and Mrs. Sam Wagner and Harold Hill, Park Commissioner of the City Council, read a resolution giving the name "Wagner Park" to the former City Park in 1955.

The original Mill caught fire and was badly damaged in March, 1955. The Civic League proclaimed "Mill Day" and enough donations were collected to repair the damage. The main floor of the Mill is equipped with long tables, benches, cook stove and gas heat. Two of Mr. Schwarz's grandsons, Arnold Hohner and Elmo Bennet, electricians, donated the wiring and labor for the repairing of their grandfather's Mill. Elmo Bennett is the present Mayor of Smith Center.

Smith Center Business in 1971

A and W Drive In	McDonald Co.
Alkar Tire Service	Mel's Maytag
Alma's Tastee Treat	Mini-Max
Arlwin Manufacturing	Modenaire Motel
Barron Body Shop	Moine's Texaco
Bennett's TV and Electric	Montgomery Ward
Bolton Gas and Electric	Myers Tax Service
Bonecutter-Hill Chevrolet	Nichols Jewelry
Boogart Supermarket	Ormsbee Hotel and Cafe
Bush Insurance Agency	Patzel, John, Optmtrst
Buss Shoe Repair	Paul's Cafe
Car Parts, Inc.	Peterson Industries
Carpenter Manor	Peterson Radio and TV
Carpenter Sand and Gravel	Phillips Service
Casey's Gambles	Pioneer Printing Office
Cates Cleaners	Pizza Place
Center Equipment Co.	Pounds Motors
Center Glass and Supply	Raymond's Skelgas
Center Lanes Bowling	Schamp's Auto Service
Center Theaters	Sealock Auto Repairs
Central Motor Tuning	Sears, Roebuck Co.
Chance Stockyards	Seems Oil
Chandler Livestock Auction	Simmons Flowers
Cinderella Beauty Salon	Simmons Furniture
Coast To Coast Store	Simmons Mortuary
Cole Farm and City Distrib.	Silver Saddle Motel
Cole Machinery and Auto Supply	Smith Center Apco
Collier Abstract Office	Smith County Tractor Co.
Conaway Repair Shop	Soapes
Creamer Motor Co.	The Style Shop
Cy's Drug Store	State Farm Insurance
Drieling Dep't Store	Thompson Texaco
Duckwall Store	Uni-Pork, Inc.
Dinah's Beauty Shop	U.S. Center Motel
Dick's Rest Home	W-H Motel
Easy Wash Launderette	Wertz Fairmont Foods
Flint's Steering Service	Western Power-CTU
Frank's Conoco	Williams Standard Oil
G and J Cycle Shop	Wanner's Repair Shop
Gas Service Co.	White-Elna Sewing Machine Co.



THE OLD DUTCH MILL in Wagner park moved to Smith Center in 1938 from the original site at Reamsville where it was erected by Charles Schwarz.

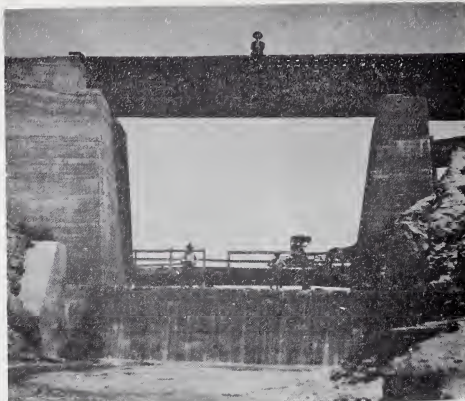
Gene's Sinclair
Hawes Drugs
Heide-Christolear, Inc.
Home Oil Co.
Humrich Bros. Grain
Ideal Truck Line
Ike's Mobil Service
Ingleboro Rest Home
Jenkins Oil Co.
Johnson Trucking Co.
Jones Tractor Sales
Kelling Trucking Co.
Kuhlman Yards
Kut and Kurl
Lucille's Diner

Rothchild Barber Shop
Seeman Barber Shop
Bihlmaier Insurance
Center Boutique
Copper Insurance
Gibson Chirprtr.
Oso-Brite Mfg. Co.
Rock Island Lines
House of Valentine
Keith's Hair Fashion
McColey's Insurance
Mark's Market
Lumpkins IGA
Lee Bros. Fina Station

The businesses, who have stories written about them in this booklet, are not included in the above list.

These firms were listed as businesses in the Smith Center Telephone Directory.

Several other businesses, such as craftsmen and skilled workers, are known to operate in Smith Center but are not listed in the Telephone Directory.



ROCK ISLAND RAILROAD bridge two miles east of Smith Center showing the dam beneath with water running over it from the Rock Island lake. This body of water furnished a boating, swimming and recreation area for many years.

Rock Island Lake – Resort Area

Rock Island Lake was built by the Chicago, Kansas and Nebraska Railway Company, which is more generally known as the Rock Island Company. It was built to hold a big supply of water for use by the railroad company. The exact date of the building of the dam is not known but it is thought to be about 1899.

The dam was built north of the railroad bridge that spans Spring Creek. The dam was about where the roadway is now. The creek bed was dynamited and the banks widened so that when it was finished it resulted in a large lake. The water was claimed to be 60 feet deep at the dam and the lake extended north to the bridge on Highway 36. In 1911 this dam washed out in a flood and was replaced in its present location.

The lake became a pleasure resort. Several Smith Center people had boats on the lake. Schuyler Stevens had 3 boats – a small sail boat, a small raft anchored for deep-water fishing and a boat on which he built a small cabin. His boats were known as “Schuyler’s Fleet”.

The lake had been stocked with fish and a group of men built a raft of wide boards nailed on logs. Around the sides were boards for seats with a smaller board placed about right for a back rest. Young folks used this raft for moonlight dances with music played on a phonograph.

Smith Center citizens used this area for picnics. Ice skating was a popular sport on Rock Island lake for many years.

Rock Island Lake was a popular place until the drouth of the 1930’s when the lake dried up and filled with sediment and once again it is Spring Creek.

The city sewer lines were laid in Smith Centre in 1918-1919.

Changes in Agriculture

The changes in agriculture that came with power farming have reduced the number of farms to a marked degree during the last 100 years. Once a family lived on nearly every 160 acres of ground, some even on 80’s. They raised their own pork and beef, milked cows and raised chickens to provide their own food supply for extra income.

The population of the county in 1907 was over 16,000 people in comparison to less than 7,000 in this centennial year. Those extra people were out there on the farms.

Farms have gotten bigger and methods have changed.

The change in farms is also reflected in the livestock industry. Once every farmer raised hogs, cattle and chickens. Now it is more specialized. Examples are Uni-Pork and other large swine plants like those owned and operated by Gary Kingsbury, Gene Arment, the Haresnape brothers and several others and cattle operations like those of Duane and Victor Jacobs, Ormal and Eldon Martin in this vicinity, and many other in the county.

Home Talent Play – “The Spy of Shiloh”

“The Spy at Shiloh” was presented at the Tabernacle in Sept, 1884, and repeated several nights to accommodate ticket buyers. According to Henry Stone, an early settler, 40 local people took part. Several groups of children and young folks appeared in different scenes. It was a real war drama, all of the men who took part were veterans of the Civil War and several had actually participated in the Battle of Shiloh. Two of the songs rendered were: “There Will Be One Vacant Chair” and “Goodbye Mother, I Must Leave You”. The cast had a colored southern “mammy” and her large family of children, all in black-face. The play was a huge success.

Old Mormon Trail One Mile South of Smith Center

This article was published in the Smith County Pioneer on January 27, 1876: “The old Mormon or Oregon Trail from Independence, Missouri, to Oregon State and to Salt Lake City, Utah, passed through the center of Smith County going only about a mile south of Smith Centre. The Trail was still plainly visible for years afterwards.”

In the years between 1843 and 1850 there was much travel through Kansas. The prairie schooners entered Kansas near Atchison and Leavenworth and wound their way across the plains. The Trail of those going northwest turned north about 100 miles west of Smith Centre and crossed the border into Nebraska.

The emigrants were the Mormons going to Utah, settlers going to Oregon and gold-seekers going to California.

Gas service was brought to Smith Centre in 1929.



SOUTH MAIN STREET in 1897 with a parade underway during the Old Soldiers reunion.

Old Soldiers Reunion in 1897

A big four-day Old Soldiers Reunion was held in Smith Centre on October 4-5-6-7 in 1897. It was largely attended and most of the veterans of the Civil War and their wives who had moved to this vicinity were camped here during the entire time.

The camp grounds covered an entire block of ground directly north of the Courthouse, where the Tabernacle was located. Small tents practically covered the grounds, mostly engaged previously by those who wished to camp there during the event. Much praise was given by the visitors for the splendid reception and interest shown by the town people. It is recalled that many of the city folks sent cakes, pies and other prepared foods to the campers during their stay.

There was a large tent where the soldiers could gather to visit and for the programs provided for entertainment. This is the description of the affair as published in the Smith County Pioneer on October 7, 1897: "Smith County veterans of the Civil War and many of their wives are attending the second annual Old Soldiers Reunion which opened here Monday and will close this Thursday evening. There has been four days of fine weather and much enjoyment in visiting and in listening to programs and music. The town band has been present every day and there has been singing of war songs, speeches and recitations. The Rev. Dwight Platt, pastor of the Congregational Church

and a veteran's son led the devotions each day. On Tuesday night the children of the city schools provided the entertainment. They marched to the grounds and to the platform headed by Boy's Drum Corps. During the Reunion town people could often hear the veterans singing "Marching Through Georgia" and "The Sword of Bunker Hill" and "The Dutch Volunteer".

The veterans registered according to the State from which they had enlisted to serve in the Civil War. Of interest to our readers the following list tells of the States from which Smith County settlers came and the number registered from each State:

Iowa - 41	Vermont - 1
Illinois - 40	Tennessee - 2
Michigan - 4	Kentucky - 2
Ohio - 23	W. Virginia - 4
Missouri - 19	Minnesota - 1
New York - 9	California - 3
Indiana - 26	Nebraska - 1
Pennsylvania - 10	Rhode Island - 1
Wisconsin - 16	Connecticut - 1
New Hampshire - 3	Kansas - 1
Massachusetts - 2	



OLD SOLDIERS REUNION in 1897. These reunions were held annually for several years. The Civil War veterans would come to town, camp in tents and stay several days. These tents appear to be in the block one block east of Main street. In the left background is the frame school building and at the right the old courthouse. The famed tabernacle is in the upper center. It was the town gathering place at that time with a stage, dances and roller skating were also held there.



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BAND in 1930's. Front row - Royal Lattin, Ralph Elson, Alvis Lowery, Marion Paul Hays, Forrest Watts, Gerald Wineinger, Frazier L. Brown, Phil Rutter. Second row - Harry Scanlon, R. A. Samuelson, Jerry Patee, Glenn Morrison, Virgil Walker, Myron Reed,

R. G. Lawrence, Third row - first two unknown, Walter Nye, Gerald Lattin, Paige Mizer, Elton Pounds, Clarence Lambert, Kl Wolfe, Back row - Unknown, Verne Wolfe, Arthur Ifland, G. E. Wineinger, Clare Wall, Raymond Thomm, Unknown.

The Story of Captain J. S. McDowell And His Sword

J. S. McDowell enlisted in the Union Army, at the age of 21, right after Fort Sumter was fired upon in 1861. He was in Company F, 77th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. He entered the army as a sergeant and was promoted to captain in 1863. In September of 1863 he was taken prisoner during the battle of Chickamauga by N. Q. Adams of Sturges, Mississippi. Captain McDowell was held prisoner at the Andersonville, Georgia, for 2 1/2 years. In late 1865 he was released and mustered out of the army.

Captain McDowell came to Smith Centre in June of 1873. He clerked in a store then bought the store and in 1880 he built his own building on the east side of Main Street about where the Montgomery Ward Store is now located. He was a Director of the First National Bank from its organization until his death. He was mayor of the city, on the Kansas Penitentiary Board and in 1899 he was appointed a Regent of Kansas State University.

In the Pioneer of May 10, 1900 it was reported that Captain McDowell had received two copies of the New York Journal. One copy was from A. U. Sheldon, former officer of the Smith County State Bank, and one copy from Mrs. Bertha Corn Brown, who was the first graduate of S.C.H.S. in 1891. The following story was in the New York Journal.

W. R. Hearst, Editor of the New York Journal:

"I, Charles A. Beauchamp, mayor of Jackson, Georgia, have a sword given me by my father. It had been presented to Capt. John McDowell, a gallant hero of the 77th regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers by the members of Company F of that regiment for meritorious services upon the battlefield, April 1, 1863. The sword was picked up on the camp field near this city in November, 1864, after the regiment had decamped on their way to Savannah. It was afterwards purchased by my father.

Though I prize the sword very highly, yet if the Captain is living, it will give me great pleasure, as one of the youngest mayors in the Empire State of the South, to return it to him or his family, the sword of honor and bravery, to keep as a precious souvenir of his brave deeds in the bloody war between the States. The hatred that once existed between the States involved in that terrible war is now dead. We are united again and all stand ready as a unit to defend the glorious Stars and Stripes from any foe that may seek to destroy the Union.

The following is the inscription on the scabbard of the sword: "Presented to Captain John S. McDowell by the members of Company F, 77th Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers, as a mark of esteem and reward for meritorious service, April 1, 1863."

I trust the New York Journal and the press of Pennsylvania will assist me in finding Capt. McDowell, so I can return the sword to the rightful owner, the priceless gift of his men."

Charles A. Beauchamp

It had been 37 years since J. S. McDowell had given up his sword and he sent a telegram to the Georgia mayor immediately. The sword came by express about 2 weeks later on May 22, 1900. On June 10, 1900 Capt. McDowell received a letter from the man who captured him at the battle of Chickamauga. It read:

J. S. McDowell
Smith Centre, Kansas
Dear Friend:

A few days ago I learned that you had, after a long time, received your sword which you handed me on the battlefield of Chickamauga. I am truly glad you have lived until the present time and have the sword in your possession, for I know from what you said at the time, no living man could prize it more highly than yourself.

I would gladly have returned it to you after the war closed but I did not have it in my possession. I had given it to my Brigadier General and he had lost it. I do not suppose we will ever see each other on earth again but we could now meet under the same flag not as enemies but as friends and we would enjoy exchanging war stories. Thirty seven years have passed and of course we both look older. I came through the war all right except that I lost my left arm at Atlanta on July 28, 1864.

I am respectfully yours,
N. Q. Adams, Sturges, Miss.

Indians and the Battle on Beaver Creek

The Pawnee Tribe lived in the north-central section of Kansas where we now live. They roamed the plains hunting and fishing for their food. The buffalo meat was good eating and the hides were large and easy to dry for clothing and made good covers for the wigwams. Fur bearing animals were plentiful on the Kansas prairies. Besides the huge herds of buffalo there were the wolf, fox, deer, elk and antelope and along the streams the beaver, otter, mink and muskrat. Fur traders came into Kansas and the Indians learned that there was such a thing as a "trade" - furs could be traded for weapons and merchandise. Trouble started when the fur traders began hunting for themselves. This stirred up hatred for the white man and the Indians watched for every opportunity for revenge. Settlers came into the State soon and the Indians resented the taking of their lands.

The Indians fought the Emigrants for the land and among themselves in revenge for grievances, either real or imagined. They fought with treachery and cunning, the fighting was mostly limited to ambush and massacre. Their weapons were the bow and arrow and a hatchet made of stone. In the earliest days of the settling of Smith County it is known that there were at least 2 stockades built by the emigrants. One of them was one half mile north of the Womer community built by the Daniel Womer family. The other known stockade was in the Independence vicinity built by the McCall family. Pioneers have often told of Indians coming to their homes and taking all of the food they had and then they would leave. It always "seemed best" to either give the food or prepare a meal for them. Of course, the families would be scared, fearing that the Indians would return. In another section of this book a tale is told of the Indians robbing the J. R. Burrow Store in Smith Centre.

There is alleged to have been published in an 1876 issue of a Smith Centre newspaper the story of a desperate Indian battle fought at the fork of Beaver Creek, 3 1/2 miles southwest of Smith Centre. The tale was told years later by an old warrior of the Pawnee tribe and also recalled by an old French trapper and hunter. This Indian battle was between the Pawnee and Omaha Indians on one side and the Cheyennes and Arapahoes on the other side.

The Pawnee party was supposed to have numbered some 7,000 warriors and the Cheyenne party about 9,000* warriors. The Pawnees lost about 2,000 on the battlefield. The Cheyennes lost 3,000 killed outright and some 700 were taken prisoner and burned at the stake. The fight lasted for 3 days and was one of the most bloody conflicts in Kansas and resulted in victory for the Pawnee Tribe.

In 1861 when Kansas became a State, and most certainly by the time Smith Centre was settled in 1871, most of the Indians had moved south and west to better hunting grounds.

Republican Ticket 1888.

FOR PRESIDENT,
BENJAMIN HARRISON.

FOR VICE PRESIDENT,
LEVI P. MORTON.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS:

JOHN L. WALLER.

EUGENE F. WARE.

ALONZO W. ROBINSON.

FRANK R. OGG.

THOMAS P. ANDERSON.

JOHN MADDEN.

DELBERT A. VALENTINE

JAMES B. MCGONIGAL.

WILLIS G. EMERSON.

For Congressman, 6th District,
E. J. TURNER.

KANSAS STATE TICKET.

For Governor,
LYMAN U. HUMPHREY.

For Lieutenant Governor,
ANDREW J. FELT.

For Secretary of State,
WILLIAM HIGGINS.

For Auditor of State,
TIMOTHY MACARTHY.

For State Treasurer,
JAMES W. HAMILTON.

For Attorney General,
L. B. KELLOGG.

For Superintendent of Public Instruction,
GEORGE W. WYANS.

For Associate Justice of Supreme Court,
WILLIAM A. JOHNSTON.

For State Senator, 1st District,
F. M. LOCKARD.

Smith County Ticket.

For Representative, 11th District,
LEMUEL FAULKNER.

For Probate Judge,
J. W. HENDERSON.

For County Attorney,
W. R. MYERS.

For Clerk of the District Court,
D. M. RELHAN.

For Superintendent Public Instruction,
V. M. NOBLE.

For Commissioner, 2d District,
D. W. WELTMER.

Centre Township Ticket.

For Trustee,
H. A. HESTER.

For Clerk,
J. W. HARWOOD.

For Treasurer,
J. M. STEVENS.

For Justices of the Peace,

W. P. ELWELL.

H. H. REED.

For Constables,
T. C. COOK.

S. D. CUMMINGS.

For Road Overseer, District No.

For the amendment to section one,
article eight of the Constitution

For the proposition to amend sec-
tion eleven of the Bill of Rights of the Con-
stitution of the State of Kansas, concerning the
purchase, enjoyment and descent of property



SECOND GRADUATING CLASS of Smith Center high school, 1892. Standing May Hoffman, Fred Macy, Gertie Mullen, Ethleen Macy (?); Seated - Mattie Wherry, Ida Lanman (?); Nettie Ferris, Minnie Ferris.

